



★★★★ United States Senator for Ohio ★★★★★

Sherrod Brown



Report to Ohioans 2014



Sen. Brown outlines the TREAT Act, which would update U.S. law to enable more health care providers to treat patients struggling with addiction



Sen. Brown tours and meets with associates at Leipsic's Pro-Tec Coating Company



Sen. Brown meets with officials at the Youngstown Air Reserve Station



Sen. Brown joins the "Fix Our Bridges Now" bus tour for a stop at the Ohio Contractors Association (OCA) to call for a bipartisan approach to fixing America's highways and bridges

Mission

Sherrod Brown fights for the middle class, because he believes that everyone who works hard and plays by the rules should be able to get ahead.

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Message from Sen. Brown

Fellow Ohioans,

One of my most important duties as senator is meeting with the Ohioans whom I serve. I have traveled to all of Ohio's 88 counties and met with people from different backgrounds. You've shared your stories and suggested ways that we can work together to strengthen our state.

This report chronicles our work together in 2014.

As I travel around our great state, I am inspired by Ohioans working to make the American dream a reality for themselves, their children, and future generations.

In 2014, I toured factories that are bringing manufacturing jobs back to Ohio, providing an onramp to the middle class for workers and their families. To support those efforts, I led the passage of the *Revitalize American Manufacturing and Innovation (RAMI) Act*. That law will create regional manufacturing hubs and a National Network of Manufacturing Innovation, helping create thousands of high-paying, high-tech manufacturing jobs.

I met with doctors and parents who are working to ensure all Ohio children get a healthy start in life. It's shameful that infant mortality is even an issue in this day and age, yet Ohio ranks the third-worst in the nation in infant mortality—and is the worst in the country for African Americans. I have championed legislation to combat infant mortality for years, and last year we finally got a bill to the President's desk and signed into law.

I traveled to farms across Ohio that grow the food that feeds our nation and fuels Ohio's economy. As the first Ohio senator in more than 40 years on the Senate Agriculture Committee, I was proud to help shepherd a long-term Farm Bill across the finish line. We saved billions with this bill, while continuing to invest in one of our state's largest and most successful industries.

I worked across the aisle to support a fix for another of our state's largest industries, passing an update to Wall Street reform legislation to streamline regulations for insurance companies like Nationwide. The financial industry isn't only on the coasts—hundreds of thousands of Ohioans work for banks and insurance companies. That's why it was so important that we work in a bipartisan way to make sure regulations protect consumers without hamstringing companies. I was proud that our bill unanimously passed the Senate and was signed by the President in December.

As your senator, I will continue to work ensure all Ohioans can realize the American dream. Below you will find highlights of our efforts and outreach to improve the lives of everyone in our great state.

Sincerely,

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Sherrod Brown
U.S. Senator

Sen. Brown is Here to Serve You:

Constituent Services

One of Sen. Brown's most important responsibilities is to provide information and assistance to the people of Ohio. He is committed to listening to Ohioans, assisting Ohioans who have encountered difficulties with federal matters, and providing other constituent services. Please contact any of Sen. Brown's offices if there is any way he can be of assistance to you or help someone you know.

Listening to Ohioans



Sen. Brown has held more than 200 roundtable discussions in all 88 of Ohio's counties. He also holds regular conference calls with constituent groups, hosts Thursday morning coffees with constituents in the Capitol, and responds to every letter and email he receives.

Constituent Coffees

Ohio constituents visiting Washington, D.C. are invited to Sen. Brown's weekly constituent coffee. Sen. Brown and his staff hold these coffees to stay in touch with Ohioans, welcome them to Washington, and get feedback on his work. For more information, please visit Sen. Brown's website: <http://brown.senate.gov>.

Correspondence

Sen. Brown places a high priority on prompt and accurate responses to letters, emails, and calls from constituents. In 2013, Sen. Brown's office received and responded to more than 475,000 emails and letters from Ohioans. To send your comments to Sen. Brown, please visit his website: <http://brown.senate.gov>.



Assisting Ohioans with Federal Matters

Sen. Brown is committed to assisting Ohioans who have encountered difficulties with federal matters. Ohioans can call Sen. Brown's state offices and work directly with a constituent services representative to obtain information or resolve an issue they are having with a federal agency. Common areas of inquiry include: Social Security and Medicare benefits, veterans' benefits, military service issues, passport or visa problems, housing matters, IRS issues, and more.

Please note: Sen. Brown's office can only provide assistance on federal matters.

When appropriate, Sen. Brown's office can help identify and locate state and local services.

Helping Ohioans with Social Security

Social Security provides critical support to millions of Ohio seniors, families, and individuals with disabilities. It provides guaranteed monthly income for disabled workers and surviving family members. Sen. Brown's office can often assist Ohioans having difficulty with the claims process.

For example, a constituent in Sandusky County requested assistance with getting his Social Security benefits refunded. The benefits had been offset to pay for his federal student loans, even though he had applied for Total and Permanent Disability Discharge. Sen. Brown's office forwarded the constituent's concerns to the U.S. Department of Education. The constituent later received his refund and was extremely appreciative of the office's assistance.

Assisting Ohioans with Medicare

Sen. Brown has heard from many Ohio seniors struggling with rising health care and prescription drug costs. Ohio seniors shouldn't have to worry about how they're going to pay for care, nor should they struggle with applying for the vital resources Medicare provides.



When a constituent from Greene County contacted Sen. Brown's office for assistance in obtaining a Medicare card and a replacement SSA Form 1099 benefits statement, Sen. Brown's office contacted the Social Security Administration on his behalf. The constituent has since confirmed receipt of the Medicare card and the replacement SSA Form 1099.

Helping Ohio Veterans and Military Families Access Benefits

Sen. Brown, a member of the U.S. Senate Committee on Veterans' Affairs, has worked on behalf of Ohioans to reduce VA benefit disparities and address the claims backlog. He and members of his staff have participated in events across the state, listening to VA officials and veterans discuss the effects of the backlog and the progress of backlog reduction efforts. Sen. Brown's office has also helped individual Ohio veterans and military families access the benefits they have earned and deserve.

For example, a veteran who recently separated from the Marine Corps reached out to Sen. Brown after waiting almost three months for his final pay. Sen. Brown's staff contacted the Marine Corps Congressional Office, and within a week the veteran received all the money he was owed.

In another case, the family of a deceased veteran had been trying for more than a year to obtain a flat bronze marker for the veteran's grave. The Cemetery Association had been unresponsive and the family was unsure if the application had been submitted to the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA). Sen. Brown's office contacted the VA and learned that an application had not been submitted. The VA accepted an email copy of the application and immediately ordered the marker. The marker was delivered to the cemetery within four weeks.

Obtaining Overdue or Replacement Medals for Ohio Veterans

Securing overdue or lost medals is a small but significant way to honor Ohio's veterans for the work they have undertaken on our behalf and serves as an inspiration to future generations from our state. Sen. Brown and his staff are honored to present many Ohio veterans and their family members with these well-deserved decorations.

For example, a veteran who served in the Navy during the 1960s never received any of the medals he believed he should have earned, and his separation document did not list any medals awarded to him. At Sen. Brown's request, the Navy Personnel Command reviewed the veteran's records and determined that he had earned four medals including the Navy Good Conduct



Medal. The medals and an updated separation document were presented to the veteran.

Sen. Brown encourages any veteran who thinks he or she may be entitled to overdue or replacement medals—or has any other question or needs assistance with the VA—to contact his office. Ohio veterans and family members of deceased veterans may request military records and medals by contacting Sen. Brown's Cleveland office at 216-522-7272 or toll-free at 888-896-6446.

Protecting Ohio Consumers

Sen. Brown, chairman of the Senate Banking Subcommittee on Financial Institutions and Consumer Protection, is committed to making the financial system work for all Americans. While citizens struggle to make ends meet, consumers must have the resources necessary to remain protected against unscrupulous and harmful banking practices. Sen. Brown's staff is here to assist Ohioans struggling with financial services.

For example, a constituent who was serving overseas contacted Sen. Brown with a complaint against her lender for her car loan. She paid the car off but had not received the title. She needed the title to ship the car back to the United States after her tour. Sen. Brown's office provided the constituent information about the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau (CFPB). She filed a complaint and later received the title.

Ohioans who have a banking complaint are encouraged to contact Sen. Brown's office or contact the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau (CFPB). The CFPB seeks to bring oversight and transparency to checking accounts, credit cards, mortgages, credit reporting, and private student loans. You can submit a complaint to the CFPB if you have experienced difficulties with a financial product by visiting www.ConsumerFinance.gov or by calling 855-411-2372.

Other Services for Constituents

Flag Requests

If you'd like to have an American flag flown over the U.S. Capitol Building to commemorate a special occasion such as a birthday, retirement, or anniversary, my staff can assist you. Flags flown over the Capitol Building are accompanied by a certificate of authenticity from the Architect of the Capitol stating the name of the person or organization the flag was flown for, the date, and the occasion. Please be aware that mail processes can often delay flag forms sent to Sen. Brown's offices, so we recommend that you submit your flag request up to six weeks in advance of your desired delivery date. For prices and information on purchasing flags, please visit Sen. Brown's website or contact his office.

Military Academy Nominations

Each year, Sen. Brown has the opportunity to nominate outstanding students to attend the Air Force Academy, the United States Military Academy, the Naval Academy, and the Merchant Marine Academy. Interested individuals should request an application in the spring of their junior year of high school. Additional information about the nominations process is available on Sen. Brown's website.

Visiting Washington, D.C.

If you are planning a trip to our nation's capital, we would like to help you make the most of your stay. My staff may be able to coordinate tours for your group at the following locations: The United States Capitol Building, Library of Congress, Supreme Court, and the Bureau of Engraving and Printing. While every effort will be made to accommodate your tour request, due to limited availability and heightened security, we ask that you let us know about your trip at least three months in advance of your arrival. The easiest way to request a tour is to visit Sen. Brown's website. If you have any questions, please call his Washington office. Sen. Brown invites visiting Ohioans to stop by for coffee in Washington, D.C. Each Thursday, when the U.S. Senate is in session, Sen. Brown and his staff meet with Ohio constituents from 8:30 a.m. to 9:15 a.m. The location of these informal sessions changes often, so please visit brown.senate.gov or my Washington office for the latest information.

Internships

Students considering a future in public service may be interested in interning for Sen. Brown in Washington, D.C. or in one of his Ohio offices. Internships can last several weeks during the summer or a full semester during the school year. Preference is given to students from Ohio or attending school in Ohio, and have completed at least one semester of college. To apply for an internship, please visit Sen. Brown's website or contact one of his offices directly.

For more information, please visit Sen. Brown's website:

http://brown.senate.gov/ohio/constituent_services

Regional Highlights

Sen. Brown and his staff are involved in an array of projects and activities across the state to improve the lives of Ohioans. The following pages provide an overview of 2014 project highlights in each region of the state.

Appalachian Ohio Regional Highlights

Creating Jobs and Promoting Economic Development

Pressing for Continued Progress of the Piketon Plant Cleanup



The American Centrifuge Plant is not only important for our national security but could also advance the revitalization of southern Ohio's economy. The cleanup and redevelopment of the Piketon plant are crucial to bringing new jobs and investment to southern Ohio. The U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) has been a committed partner in the cleanup, but more must be done to ensure that this site is primed for redevelopment while mitigating environmental impact.

In February, Sen. Brown and Sen. Rob Portman requested an official meeting with Energy Secretary Ernest Moniz to discuss the long-term viability and ongoing progress at the American Centrifuge Project (ACP) in Piketon. The request followed the successful passage of a bipartisan appropriation package in January 2014 that devoted additional funding to continue research, development and deployment (RD&D) work being done at the site. The ACP Plant develops enriched uranium, a key component in the development of nuclear energy as well as our national security needs.

In May, Sen. Brown met with Dr. Monica Regalbuto, nominee to be Assistant Secretary of Energy for Environmental Management. If confirmed, Regalbuto will lead the DOE cleanup and redevelopment efforts at more than 100 previous nuclear sites, including the Portsmouth Gaseous Diffusion Plant in Piketon. Sen. Brown has fought to secure more than one billion dollars in federal funding to help cleanup and redevelop the site for future economic development use. Nearly 2,200 jobs are related to the cleanup efforts.

During a November public meeting, Sen. Brown submitted an official public comment on the cleanup and future redevelopment plan at the Portsmouth Gaseous Diffusion Plant in Piketon. In his statement, Sen. Brown urged federal and state officials to work closely with stakeholders in Piketon, Portsmouth, and surrounding communities as cleanup and redevelopment of the site is pursued.

“The site and the community will fully realize the benefits of redevelopment if the Department of Energy closely follows the recommendations outlined by the Portsmouth SSAB. I believe these plans provide an excellent opportunity to fulfill the DOE’s obligation to fully clean up the site while creating new economic opportunities in Pike, Scioto, Ross, and Jackson counties,” said Sen. Brown.

Preventing Layoffs and Protecting Ohio Jobs at Piketon Plant

In July 2014, Sen. Brown and Sen. Portman joined members of the Ohio Congressional delegation calling on the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) to take steps to prevent the possible layoffs of nearly 700 workers employed on the cleanup of the Portsmouth Gaseous Diffusion Plant in Piketon. In their letter to Energy Secretary Ernest Moniz, the senators urged the Department to advocate within the Obama Administration and with Members of Congress to forestall the proposed layoffs and help continue the cleanup of the site.

“The Department of Energy (DOE) has worked collaboratively with the Piketon community to develop an aggressive cleanup strategy that would see the project completed by 2024, improve the environmental footprint of the site, prepare the site for reindustrialization, save taxpayer dollars, and maximize employment levels,” the delegation wrote. “But last week’s announcement put the Department of Energy’s previous efforts in jeopardy. If DOE fully exercises the layoffs, it would mean a loss of one-third of the current workforce. This would significantly delay the completion date for the project which would inflate the project’s cost and force taxpayers to pay billions more to complete the same amount of work.”

In July, Sen. Brown met with Jennifer Chandler of Wastren Advantage, Inc. in Piketon, and Kevin Shoemaker and Steve Shepherd of the Southern Ohio Diversification Initiative at his weekly coffee with constituents during their visit to Washington, D.C. They discussed the importance of continued cleanup efforts at the Portsmouth Gaseous Diffusion Plant and the critical importance of preserving 700 local jobs at the site.

Assisting Job Seekers at Marietta Jobs Fair



In March, Sen. Brown’s office and Washington State Community College (WSCC) in Marietta co-hosted a career fair for job seekers on the campus of WSCC. Local businesses in a variety of fields—including health care, banking, construction, transportation, retail, and manufacturing—were available for interested candidates to network and conduct on-site interviews. Additionally, Washington-Morgan Community Action and Mid-Ohio Valley Veteran Outreach were available to help qualified workers in Ohio find available employment opportunities.

Supporting American Footwear Manufacturers

American taxpayer dollars should be spent supporting the American economy. Sen. Brown applauded the April announcement that the U.S. Department of Defense (DOD) will give precedence to U.S. manufacturers when making taxpayer funding procurements. In fully abiding by the “Berry Amendment,” DOD will require U.S. servicemembers to use their athletic footwear allowances on American made products, benefiting domestic companies like Portsmouth’s Sole Choice. In 2013, Sen. Brown urged President Obama to support American workers and businesses by only purchasing athletic footwear that is made with American produced materials. DOD’s decision is the culmination of that and other likeminded efforts. The Administration should continue to endorse “Buy American” provisions which create jobs while supporting our servicemembers.



Applauding Dedication of New Business Incubator to Create Jobs

In June, Sen. Brown applauded the dedication of the new technology incubator in New Philadelphia. The Tolloty Technology Incubator was developed by Kent State University in partnership with the Tuscarawas Community Improvement Corporation. Sen. Brown is the author of legislation that would make it easier for local communities to receive federal funds for business and technology incubators.

“The Tolloty Technology Incubator will promote innovation and entrepreneurship by providing support to existing and start-up companies in Tuscarawas County,” Sen. Brown said. “This will create high-skill, high-wage jobs for Ohioans and improve the local economy. I will do everything that I can to support the growth of the facility so that it can provide opportunities for the region’s workers and businesses.”

Retraining Southeastern Ohio Workers for High Paying Jobs



Ohioans shouldn’t struggle to find work while Ohio companies struggle to fill jobs. With too many workers in southeastern Ohio unable to find work, we must do all that we can to ensure that our workers are qualified to fill available jobs. Sen. Brown visited Zane State College’s new Advanced Science and Technology Center and the Ohio Means Jobs-Jefferson County Jobs Center to announce a plan that would improve the nation’s workforce development system to help Eastern Ohioans train for high-paying jobs and provide

local businesses with the skilled workers they need to compete. In June 2014, President Obama signed into law the *Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act* (WIOA) to reauthorize the *Workforce Investment Act*. WIOA contains provisions modeled after Sen. Brown’s *SECTORS Act*, which would help dislocated workers acquire the skills for high-tech jobs in their region.

Providing Academic and Job Skills Training for Vinton County At-Risk Youth

Helping young people get a foothold in the workforce is critical to Ohio's long-term success. We must pay special attention to at-risk youth and ensure they have the opportunity to get a good education and the job skills they need to succeed. Sen. Brown announced that Sojourners Care Network in McArthur was awarded \$1,100,000 to provide academic and job skills training for at-risk youth by the United States Department of Labor's (DOL) YouthBuild program.

Expanding Advanced Manufacturing

Ohio's manufacturing history and rich network of public-private partnerships make our state a leader in innovation. During visits to Lauren Manufacturing in New Philadelphia and Quanex Building Products in Cambridge in August, Sen. Brown called for passage of his legislation to boost manufacturing by bringing together industry, universities and community colleges, federal agencies and all levels of government to accelerate manufacturing innovation in technologies with commercial applications. The bipartisan *Revitalize American Manufacturing and Innovation Act* (RAMI) – which was signed into law in December 2014 – will bolster these collaborations by establishing public-private institutes to leverage resources to bridge the gap between basic research and product development, provide shared assets to help companies—particularly small and medium-size manufacturing enterprises—access cutting-edge capabilities and equipment, and create an environment to educate and train students and workers in advanced manufacturing skills.



Creating Jobs and Boosting Economic Development in Holmes County

Our state's most valuable resource is its people. That's why it is important that we come together to share successes and pool resources to tackle our most difficult challenges. Sen. Brown visited Holmes County to outline policies to promote job growth and economic development during a speech to local government officials, business leaders, and economic development experts. Sen. Brown also highlighted policies that help support Ohio industries while addressing leaders from Belmont, Carroll, Columbiana, Coshocton, Guernsey, Harrison, Holmes, Jefferson, Muskingum, and Tuscarawas Counties. By working together, we can create a climate that helps businesses hire workers, export goods, and strengthen our communities.

Strengthening Trade Enforcement to Protect Appalachian Ohio Jobs

Supporting Zanesville Workers and Their Families

The loss of a job can be devastating. Ohioans who work and play by the rules should not be left to struggle when they lose their job through no fault of their own. In January, Sen. Brown announced that all workers at EMCO USA, LLC in Zanesville are eligible to apply for worker adjustment assistance through the U.S. Department of Labor. Sen. Brown urged the Department of Labor to act swiftly to ensure financial support for the workers and their families. The Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) program is a federal program that provides aid to workers who

lose their jobs or whose work hours and wages are reduced as a result of increased imports. The program provides benefits including training for employment in another job or career, income support, job search allowances, and relocation allowances. These resources will help ensure that displaced workers in Zanesville have the financial support and training opportunities to get a fresh start.

Strengthening “Buy America” Provisions

For our economy to continue adding jobs, we must ensure American taxpayer dollars are used to support manufacturers and workers at home, not overseas. In July 2015, President Obama signed into law the *Water Resources Reform and Development Act* (WRRDA), a critical water infrastructure bill that included an amendment that Sen. Brown introduced to ensure that all federally-funded water infrastructure projects use American-made iron, steel, and manufactured goods.

The law will benefit Ohio manufacturers like Clow Water Systems in Coshocton.

Standing Up for Jobs in Washington County

Manufacturing is the backbone of the American economy. Ohio manufacturers can compete with any in the world. But they deserve to compete on a level playing field. That means holding accountable countries that violate trade law by illegally dumping their products into our markets. When we do, we help ensure that American companies like Globe Metallurgical in Beverly can continue to provide quality American-made materials used in the manufacturing of steel and cast iron.

In May, Sen. Brown sent a letter to Commerce Secretary Penny Pritzker urging the Department to take action if Russia continues to impede an investigation into unfairly traded imports of ferrosilicon from Russia. Recent reports indicate that Russian exporters are undermining the Commerce Department’s investigation by withholding key information necessary to determine the duties that would be imposed on Russian imports if they are deemed as “unfairly dumped” into American markets. Sen. Brown’s letter aimed to protect jobs at American manufacturers like Beverly, Ohio’s Globe Metallurgical, an alloy producer which manufactures ferrosilicon.

Helping Small Businesses Grow and Add Jobs

Ensuring Buy American Provisions to Protect Ohio Jobs and Businesses



We leave our manufacturing sector vulnerable when we buy steel and iron from foreign countries. In addition to the “Buy America” provisions in the water infrastructure bill, the Fiscal Year 2014 omnibus appropriations bill passed in January also contained “Buy American” provisions to ensure that any iron and steel product used in State water pollution control revolving funds be Made-in-America. The provision was included in the overall appropriations for the U.S. Department of the Interior and benefits several Ohio companies, including Clow Valve Company in Coshocton. “Buy America” provisions support

American companies and workers, like those at Clow Valve Company, by giving a preference to domestically-produced iron, steel, and other manufactured goods in infrastructure projects that receive federal aid.

Promoting Job Retraining and Investments in Low-Income Communities

In March, Sen. Brown visited Harrison County to tour the Freeport Press and meet with its workers. During the tour with owner David Pilcher, Sen. Brown learned about the company's plans to expand using \$6 million in federal resources, and its need for skilled workers. Sen. Brown also called for Congress to pass two key pieces of legislation he authored that would help rural economies grow and help the workers of these companies workers retrain for high-tech jobs in their region. Freeport Press is an excellent example of the impact smart investments can have in rural communities. Its workers are talented and hardworking.

During the tour, Sen. Brown learned more about the Freeport Press' plans to develop its facility using \$6 million in New Markets Tax Credit (NMTC) funding. The NMTC program incentivizes community developers to invest in low-income areas. Sen. Brown urged Congress to pass his first of its kind legislation, the

Manufacturing Communities Investment Act, which would build on the proven success of the NMTC. Specifically, Sen. Brown's legislation would spur local job creation by extending and enhancing the NMTC to allocate additional dollars for investment in struggling manufacturing communities.



Building Appalachian Ohio Infrastructure and Transportation

Improving Water Systems in Appalachia

Ohio's rural communities and small towns face a heavy burden when financing infrastructure projects. In January, Sen. Brown announced that the Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) awarded a grant to the Ohio Environmental Protection Agency (OEPA) to improve water systems in several Appalachian Ohio communities. The Tupper Plains-Chester Water District in Meigs County will replace the existing Bashan Booster Station in Chester with a new above grade booster station. Falls Gore Township in Hocking County and Coal Township in Perry County will construct a new waterline, valves, hydrants, and service reconnections. The Village of Winchester will install a new 400 gallon per minute sewage lift station, one raw wastewater screen, and related systems at the existing wastewater treatment plant.

The ARC also awarded grants to the OEPA for the Gallipolis Water Pollution Control Facility Improvements Project and the Pomeroy Water System Improvements Project and to the Columbiana Board of Commissioners for the Village of Kensington Wastewater Treatment System. These improvement projects will provide residents and businesses with modern day sewer systems that improve health quality and encourage investment in Appalachia.

Sen. Brown also announced that the United States Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Rural Utilities Service (RUS) awarded \$874,000 to the Village of New Matamoras for water system improvements. The project, funded through the RUS Water and Environmental Program, will improve water infrastructure – providing access to clean water and creating jobs. This federal investment will lead to more reliable service for residents, more efficient operations for local businesses, and cleaner waterways for New Matamoras.



Improving Southeast Ohio Roadways

Sen. Brown was pleased to announce new federal funds to support the Tuscarawas School Street Improvements project. The funds were awarded by the Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) in order to make sidewalk and road improvements, replace old waterline, improve street drainage, and create marked on-street parking spaces. The Village of Tuscarawas will make these improvements on School Street around Indian Valley Middle School, improving parking for 32 residences and making walking safer for 460 students. This improvement project will ensure that the students of Tuscarawas are safe as they arrive at school to pursue their education.

Sen. Brown was also pleased to announce new federal funds to realign and reconstruct a portion of roadways in Howland Township. The project will improve roadway at the intersections of Commonwealth Avenue and North River Road NE and of Commonwealth Avenue and Phoenix Road NE. The funds were awarded by the Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) and will help support retaining the jobs of 76 workers.

Redeveloping Southeast Ohio's Brownfield Sites

Ohio's brownfield sites represent opportunities for redevelopment and new growth. In May, Sen. Brown announced new federal funds to support environmental brownfield site assessments in Columbiana and Athens Counties. The funds were awarded to the City of Salem and the Athens County Port Authority by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) Fiscal Year 2014 Brownfields Assessment, Revolving Loan Fund, and Cleanup (ARC) program. These funds will help support cleanup and decontamination efforts critical to the safety and economic success of Salem and Athens County.

Repairing Dams on Margaret Creek

Sen. Brown, a senior member of the Senate Agriculture Committee, announced that the United States Department of Agriculture's (USDA) National Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) has awarded \$335,000 in funding for two watershed rehabilitation projects at Margaret Creek, a waterway flowing through Athens and Meigs Counties. Margaret Creek's dams will be repaired in order to prevent flooding and decreased water quality from watershed run-off.

“Public health and safety is threatened if we don’t maintain our dams,” Sen. Brown said. “Structural erosion can lead to flooding and, as we have seen the past few years around Ohio, unmanaged run-off can dramatically harm water quality. These new federal resources will help protect communities in Athens and Meigs Counties from flooding and contaminated water.”

Supporting Infrastructure in Jefferson County

Sen. Brown announced that Jefferson County was awarded \$9.2 million by the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) to repair damage to federal highways and roads caused by heavy rainfall and serious landslides in March 2011.

“Jefferson County residents and businesses hit hard by storm-related damage should not have to shoulder the burden of making major repairs to federal highways and surrounding areas without support,” Sen. Brown said. “These new resources will help local communities make the repairs needed to keep moving Ohioans and Ohio-made goods along safe federal highways.”

New Resources to Improve Appalachian Ohio Airports

Sen. Brown was pleased to announce that Richard Downing Airport in Coshocton, Jefferson County Airpark, James A. Rhodes Airport in Jackson, and Pike County Airport in Waverly were awarded funds by the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT). Funds will be used to purchase additional land, pave runways, and repair aprons. These federal dollars will go a long way in sustaining travel in and out of the airport for area residents and businesses.

Supporting Servicemembers, Veterans, and Law Enforcement

Portsmouth Student Appointed to U.S. Military Academy at West Point

In February, Sen. Brown announced that the U.S. Military Academy at West Point extended an Offer of Appointment to Portsmouth High School student Jacob Albrecht. Sen. Brown nominated the Portsmouth resident for the Military Academy at West Point. “Ohio schools are educating the young people who will become the next generation of military leaders. I am proud that Jacob has been offered the opportunity to attend one of our nation’s most prestigious institutions,” said Sen. Brown. “Mr. Albrecht’s family and the entire Portsmouth community should be proud of this dynamic young man, who embodies the integrity and courage needed to represent well and uphold the values of our nation.”

Each year, Sen. Brown nominates up to 10 students for each slot at our nation’s service academies requiring congressional recommendations, including: the Air Force Academy; the Naval Academy; the Military Academy at West Point; and the Merchant Marine Academy. This year, because two openings were available at both the Air Force Academy and the Naval Academy, Sen. Brown nominated 20 students to those institutions. A nomination does not guarantee acceptance into a service academy. The Academy’s Admissions Board ultimately decides who receives an appointment.

New Resources for Appalachian Ohio Firefighters



Firefighters put their lives on the line each day to keep our communities safe. It is important that Ohio's responders have the staff and equipment necessary to keep residents safe. Sen. Brown was pleased to announce new federal resources awarded to fire departments in Appalachia for hiring by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security's (DHS) Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Assistance to Firefighters Grant (AFG) program. The following departments received new federal resources to ensure

that Appalachian Ohio's skilled responders have the updated resources they need to safely do their jobs:

- Lawrence County: Upper Township Volunteer Fire Department
- Carroll County: Sherrodsville EMS, Carrollton Village Fire Department, Dellroy Community Volunteer Fire Department
- Coshocton County: Jackson Township Fire Department
- Pike County: Stockdale Volunteer Fire Department, Elm Grove Volunteer Fire Department, Pebble Township Volunteer Fire Department
- Tuscarawas County: Strasburg Volunteer Fire Department
- Meigs County: Syracuse Volunteer Fire Department
- Holmes County: Baltic Fire and Rescue
- Jefferson County: Adena Volunteer Fire Company, Unionport Volunteer Fire & Rescue, Toronto Fire Department
- Belmont County: Martins Ferry Volunteer Fire Department
- Muskingum County: Adamsville Fire Department, the Falls Township Volunteer Fire Department, the Zanesville Fire Department
- Harrison County: Jewett Volunteer Fire Department
- Ross County: Chillicothe Fire Department
- Scioto County: Porter Township Fire Department
- Monroe County: Clarington Volunteer Fire Department

Providing Housing and Medical Assistance for Homeless Veterans in Ross County

Sen. Brown announced new funding to provide rental assistance and clinical services for homeless veterans in Chillicothe as a part of the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development-Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing (HUD-VASH) voucher program. The program provides housing assistance for homeless veterans while partnering them with a local Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) medical center.

"This rental assistance for homeless veterans in Chillicothe is an important step in honoring the promise to support those who have already given so much to our nation," Sen. Brown said.

Supporting Social Security, Medicare, and Health Care

New Federal Funds for Community Health Center Development in Southeast Ohio

In April, Sen. Brown announced that Community Action Committee of Pike County, an agency dedicated to addressing the causes of poverty, and Family Healthcare, Inc., a group of medical centers dedicated to providing quality, affordable healthcare without discrimination, received new resources from the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) to support primary care health services. Family Healthcare, Inc. serves Athens, Hocking, Meigs, Perry, Ross, and Vinton Counties.

“Community health centers play a vital role in helping Ohioans obtain access to primary and preventive health care services,” said Sen. Brown. “These new federal resources will help Community Action Committee of Pike County and Family Healthcare Inc. provide affordable and accessible health care to more of Pike County’s children, seniors, and parents.”



Addressing Black Lung Disease in Ohio

Ohio’s coal miners play a critical role in our communities and our nation’s energy independence, but they shouldn’t have to risk their health to provide for their families. Despite record-high incidence of Black Lung Disease among miners, many miners are unable to claim the benefits they deserve. In November, Sen. Brown introduced legislation that would cut this claims backlog and prevent the denial of miners’ black lung benefits. This legislation would streamline the process and ensure workers and their families receive the support and benefits they’re owed.

In the past year, the U.S. Department of Labor has taken several steps to address the issue, but without congressional action, disabled coal miners who deserve black lung benefits will continue to be unfairly denied.

Supporting Mental Health and Substance Abuse Treatment Services



Sen. Brown recently announced that the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) awarded \$250,000 in funding through the health law to Ironton and Lawrence County Area Community Action Organization’s health center to help support and expand its mental health and substance abuse treatment services.

Sen. Brown also visited Belmont County recently to outline a plan to help fight the scourge of opiate abuse wreaking havoc throughout Ohio. Sen. Brown announced his support for *The Recovery Enhancement for Addiction Treatment Act* (TREAT Act), legislation that would change U.S. law to enable more health care providers to treat larger numbers of patients struggling with addiction.

Supporting Appalachian Ohio's Agricultural and Rural Economy

Protecting American Dairy and Cheese Producers

Ohio dairy producers make some of the highest quality cheese in the world. Their product is as good as any from Europe and should be given equal opportunity to compete in the food market. With Ohio ranking 10th in overall domestic cheese production, Sen. Brown is working to protect Ohio dairy farmers and producers from a European initiative that would change common names for cheeses frequently purchased by American consumers. His efforts would protect producers like Fresno's Pearly Valley Cheese Inc., which produces and distributes Emmentaler, Muenster, Havarti, and provolone cheeses. In a bipartisan letter signed by more than 50 of his Senate colleagues, Sen. Brown urged the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) and the United States Trade Representative (USTR) to fight European Union (EU) efforts to prohibit American dairy producers from using dozens of common cheese names. The EU claims that dairy products bearing names such as asiago, feta, parmesan, and Muenster are "geographical indicators" and can only be appropriately displayed on products made in certain areas of Europe.

Increasing Housing Access for Rural Residents

It can often be difficult for rural communities to fully fund critical housing or infrastructure projects. The 2014 Farm Bill made important changes in the way U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) determines eligibility for rural housing programs. Sen. Brown, a senior member of the Senate Agriculture Committee, announced new federal housing resources available to residents in Washington County as part of the 2014 Farm Bill implementation. Changes to the "rural area definition" used by the USDA will expand eligibility for rural housing programs for residents in southeast Ohio. With this definition change, more residents in Washington County will now have access to affordable homeownership programs through the USDA.

New Resources for Rural Economic Development in Athens

In July, Sen. Brown was pleased to announce that the Appalachian Center for Economic Networks (ACEnet) in Athens will receive a grant from the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Rural Microentrepreneur Assistance Program (RMAP). ACEnet will use these funds to provide rural microentrepreneurs with technical assistance and training. A microentrepreneur is a small business with 10 or fewer employees.

Through the RMAP program, Microenterprise Development Organizations (MDOs) like ACEnet receive loans and grants from the USDA, which they use to provide rural microentrepreneurs with training and technical assistance or microloans from established revolving loan funds.

Recognizing The Foundation for Appalachian Ohio

Strong rural communities demand economic investment and development. Sen. Brown applauded the Foundation for Appalachian Ohio for earning the 2014 Secretaries' Award for Public-Philanthropic Partnerships, awarded by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), and the Council on Foundations. This award honors philanthropic foundations that have worked to increase the quality of life for low- and moderate-income Americans in communities across the country through partnerships with the public sector. The Foundation for Appalachian Ohio's winning project, the Growing Home Initiative, launched in 2012 to create geographic affiliates in

communities that lack local philanthropic resources and to develop and grow community funds for various community enrichment projects.

Other Southeast Ohio Highlights

New Federal Funds for Head Start Programs



In April, Sen. Brown announced new federal funds to support Head Start programs run by Community Action Committee of Pike County, an agency in Piketon dedicated to addressing the causes of poverty, and Hocking-Athens-Perry Community Action, an agency in Glouster fighting poverty through social programs. In June, Head Start programs run by Athens-Meigs Educational Service Center headquartered in Chauncey and Community Action Commissioner of Belmont County, Inc., and Community Action Agency of

Columbiana County, Inc. also received funding. The funds were awarded by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) and cover full-year programs, part-day programs, and technical assistance.

In October and November, Sen. Brown announced a total of \$4,158,613 in new federal funds to support Head Start programs in southeast Ohio.

“This is excellent news for southeast Ohio families and their children,” Sen. Brown said. “Head Start ensures that children have the skills they need to succeed in elementary school and beyond.”

Head Start is a federal program that provides children, until the age of five, from low-income families with programming to prepare them for school. These programs, including health, nutrition, and social services, are designed to ensure their healthy cognitive, social, and emotional development.

Federal Funds for Service Programs in Athens

AmeriCorps service members volunteer to help their neighbors, support local military families, and educate communities. Their critical work helps build stronger communities and uplift our fellow Ohioans. Sen. Brown announced that federal funds were awarded to Ohio Stream RestoreCorps by the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS) to support AmeriCorps service programs. This funding will allow for 26 more AmeriCorps volunteers to serve in The Plains. Ohio Stream RestoreCorps, which restores watersheds in Appalachian Ohio, is a branch of Rural Action, Inc.

Welcoming Ohioans to Washington D.C.

In May, Sen. Brown met with a former staff member of his in the Ohio Secretary of State’s Office, Somerset resident Amy Beck-Cody. Mrs. Beck-Cody, who attended Sen. Brown’s

weekly coffee with constituents in Washington, D.C., was joined by her daughter Veronica Cody.

“It was an honor to see Amy again and meet her daughter Veronica,” Sen. Brown said. “Reunions like these are a big part of why I enjoy hosting my weekly coffee meetings with constituents.”

Mrs. Beck-Cody served as an intern in Sen. Brown’s office while he was serving his first term as Ohio Secretary of State. After graduation, she went on to work as a Communications Assistant in his office.

In June, Sen. Brown met with Scott Kostohryz, Nick Reed, and Marissa Singley, students at Ohio University’s Russ College of Engineering and Technology; and their professor, Greg Kremer. The group attended his weekly coffee with constituents during its trip to Washington D.C. to accept the first place prize in the AbilityOne Design Challenge.

In July, Sen. Brown met with Rory Phillips of Portsmouth, a representative of Safety Net Hospitals for Pharmaceutical Access (SNHPA). Phillips, along with a group of other Ohio SNHPA advocates, attended Sen. Brown’s weekly coffee with constituents where they thanked him for supporting the Public Health Service 340B drug discount program, which allows health centers that care for underserved populations to purchase outpatient drugs at reduced prices.

Central Ohio Regional Highlights

Creating Jobs and Promoting Economic Development

Announcing a New Manufacturing Institute in Columbus and Creating New Jobs

American workers have the drive, the creativity, and the determination to out-innovate the rest of the world. Sen. Brown's call to create a National Network of Manufacturing Innovation gained momentum in February with the announcement of two new advanced manufacturing innovation institutes. The American Lightweight Materials Manufacturing Innovation Institute (ALMMII) will establish a unique public-private partnership led jointly by The Ohio State University (OSU), the University of Michigan, and the Columbus-based Edison Welding Institute (EWI). The project is projected to create more than 10,000 new jobs in the next five years. In addition to the lead partners, seven universities, 17 non-industry members, and 30 companies—including Alcoa, Boeing, Honda, and General Electric—will participate in the collaboration. By developing innovative partnerships among the U.S. Department of Defense, research institutions, like OSU, and industry organizations like EWI, we can help ensure that American workers and businesses have the resources they need to develop the next generation of high-tech manufacturing industries. This type of investment helps rebuild our nation's manufacturing sector while creating new jobs and strengthening our middle class.



Calling for an Increase in the Federal Minimum Wage



Every year, millions of Americans are working hard and taking responsibility but are struggling to make ends meet, because they are living on tips for wages. Sen. Brown, Rep. Joyce Beatty, and Labor Secretary Thomas Perez were in Columbus to call on Congress to strengthen the middle class and promote economic opportunity for all Americans by raising both the federal minimum wage and the federal tipped minimum wage – which stands at just \$2.13 per hour. At Brothers Drake Meadery in

Columbus, Sen. Brown, Rep. Beatty, and Sec. Perez highlighted the economic benefits of the *Fair Minimum Wage Act*, legislation that would raise the federal minimum wage to \$10.10 an hour in three steps and provide the first minimum wage increase to tipped employees in more than 20 years. Every hardworking American deserves the opportunity to earn a living wage. Passing the *Fair Minimum Wage Act* and raising the tipped minimum wage is a step in the right direction.

Earning a base wage of \$3.98 or \$7.95 an hour isn't very much when you need to put food on the table, fill your gas tank, send your children to school, and provide a safe place for them to live. Sen. Brown was in Columbus for the "Give America A Raise" bus tour to call for the passage of legislation that would raise both the federal minimum wage and the federal tipped minimum wage – which stands at just \$3.98 in Ohio. A report released in March showed that women

account for 55 percent of Americans who would receive a raise under the *Fair Minimum Wage Act* and 72 percent of worker in predominantly tipped occupations. By passing the *Fair Minimum Wage Act*, we ensure that hardworking men and women have a little more income to help meet personal and family needs while adding nearly 140,000 new jobs over the next three years.

Addressing Regulatory Concerns

In March, Sen. Brown held a hearing, entitled “Finding the Right Capital Regulations for Insurers,” that examined whether capital requirements established in Dodd-Frank should require insurance companies to adhere to the same capital standards as traditional bank holding companies (BHCs). Three months later, the Senate unanimously passed legislation, introduced by Sen. Brown, which clarified that the Federal Reserve has the authority to make the distinctions between the banking and insurance industries when setting capital standards. The House passed Sen. Brown’s legislation and it was signed by the President in December. This legislation will help ensure that entities like Nationwide Insurance, based in Columbus, will not have to worry about a one-size-fits-all regulation and gives consumers the reassurance that new regulations won’t force interest rate increases. The Federal Reserve has long recognized this distinction between the industries, but before Sen. Brown’s legislative effort, it potentially lacked the legal authority to do so.

Hosting High-Growth Industry Career Fair in Columbus

In August, Sen. Brown’s office cohosted a high-growth industry career fair for interested job seekers in Columbus. The career fair was held at the Center for Workforce Development on the campus of Columbus State Community College and was cohosted by Columbus State, the Central Ohio Workforce Investment Corporation (COWIC), and Ohio Means Jobs Columbus – Franklin County. Local businesses in a variety of fields—including health care, information technology, logistics, and manufacturing—were available for interested candidates to network and conduct on-site interviews. Additionally, COWIC and representatives from Ohio Means Jobs were on hand to provide jobseekers information and advice on available training programs.

Raising Post Office Concerns to Protect Jobs

The Columbus Region is quickly becoming a leader in the logistics industry in Ohio. In November, the offices of Sens. Brown and Portman and Rep. Pat Tiberi sent a letter to Postmaster General Patrick Donahoe urging the United States Postal Service (USPS) to address ongoing concerns regarding ZIP Code boundaries at the 1.4 million-square-foot Personal Care, Health and Beauty Park in New Albany. Because the facility falls under multiple USPS ZIP Codes, customers experience shipping and mailing delays at the supply chain center. In June, the delegation brought together leaders from the City of New Albany, the New Albany Company, the Columbus Chamber of Commerce, businesses located at the logistics park, and the USPS to address a draft boundary change proposal.

Speaking and Listening to Central Ohio Businesses

In May, Sen. Brown delivered the keynote address at the Columbus Chamber’s Government Day luncheon. The Columbus Chamber is the largest business services organization for the Columbus business community and serves as the voice of businesses to the government. At the event, Sen. Brown promoted the *Revitalize American Manufacturing and Innovation* (RAMI)

Act, which was cosponsored by Sen. Brown and included in the Omnibus budget legislation passed in December.

Preserving Jobs at Marion Popcorn Production Facilities

Following ConAgra Foods' announcement that it plans to shutter two Marion County popcorn production facilities, Sen. Brown sent a letter to company leadership urging ConAgra to explore all available options to help save the more than 160 Ohio jobs located at the company's Marion and Morral plants.

"Ohio workers are second to none in work ethic, productivity, and proficiency," Sen. Brown said. "These employees are among ConAgra's most competitive assets. That is why I am disappointed by ConAgra's decision to shutter these two facilities. I urge ConAgra to explore every alternative plan to help save these facilities and the 160 local jobs that depend on them."

In early June, ConAgra announced it will close its Marion facility in October 2014, followed by its Morral, Ohio facility by the end of June 2015. Sen. Brown's letter to Chief Executive Officer Gary Rodkin points to ConAgra's commitment to Ohio as a key reason to continue production at both facilities.

Keeping Jobs at Lancaster-Based Everywhere Global Inc.



Sen. Brown applauded an agreement that averted bankruptcy at Lancaster-based EveryWare Global Inc., the parent company of Anchor Hocking Company. Headquartered in Lancaster since its inception in 1905, Anchor Hocking employs more than 1,200 Ohioans and is a leading manufacturer of Made-in-the-USA glass tableware and bakeware. In 2011, Sen. Brown met employees and toured the Anchor Hocking plant in Lancaster.

"Today's announcement by EveryWare Global is a step in the right direction toward rebuilding the financial wellbeing of the company and its flagship brand – Anchor Hocking. Anchor Hocking has a proud history in central Ohio – more than 100 years running – due in large part to its dedicated and skilled workforce. I am encouraged that this agreement will keep the Lancaster plant operational and the nearly 1,200 Ohioans who work at Anchor Hocking on the job. I applaud both management and members of the United Steelworkers for finding common ground and working toward shared success."

Applauding Expansion of Columbus Castings

Sen. Brown applauded an announcement by Columbus Castings that it plans to expand capacity at its Southside plant, adding 550 new jobs. Columbus Castings is the largest single-site steel foundry in North America, and has been a leading Ohio manufacturer for more than 100 years.

In 2012, Sen. Brown toured Columbus Castings and met with workers and leadership to discuss his *Currency Exchange Rate Oversight Reform Act*, legislation that would hold accountable countries, like China, that undervalue their currency. By undervaluing their currency, these

nations give their exports an unfair price advantage. Sen. Brown was joined by CEO Rick Ruebusch, who discussed how his company—a manufacturer of undercarriage components for rail cars and a variety of heavy-duty industrial components—is facing the prospect of Chinese companies selling unfairly underpriced, low-grade products in the United States.

Maintaining Good-Paying Jobs at Port Columbus

From the handling of their luggage to troubleshooting customer service issues, air travelers flying through Port Columbus deserve top-notch service. In June, Sen. Brown sent a letter to Jeff Smisek, CEO of United Airlines, urging the company to reconsider a recent policy change that requires United employees in some cities – including customer service agents and baggage handlers at Port Columbus International Airport in Columbus – to compete against outside contractors to retain their positions. United Airlines earned more than \$1 billion in profits in recent years and much of that is attributed to the hard work and dedication of its employees. Pushing workers into low-wage jobs does not make United, or any other carrier, more competitive.

Strengthening Trade Enforcement to Protect Central Ohio Jobs

Defending American Auto Exports Against Chinese Violation of International Trade Law

In May, Sens. Brown and Portman applauded the World Trade Organization's (WTO) decision to defend the American auto industry from China's illegal tariffs on U.S. autos. Troubled by China's violation of WTO rules in application of anti-dumping duties and countervailing duties on American-made auto exports, the senators urged the United States Trade Representative (USTR) to investigate the tariffs and use all available tools to protect Ohio workers and businesses. As a result, President Obama filed a complaint to the WTO, which ruled that China must rescind these tariffs against American auto exports. This will directly benefit Ohio manufacturers that produce parts for the Honda Acura in Marysville.

Levelling the Playing Field for Ohio Companies

Manufacturing is the backbone of the American economy and Ohio manufacturers can compete with any in the world. But they deserve to compete on a level playing field. That means holding accountable countries that violate trade law by illegally dumping their products into our markets. When we do, we help ensure that American companies, like Nucor Steel in Marion, can continue to provide quality American-made rebar to help build the next generation of American infrastructure.

Sens. Brown and Portman joined a bipartisan group of 31 U.S. Senators in a letter to Commerce Secretary Penny Pritzker urging the Department to continue to investigate illegal dumping and subsidies on unfairly traded imports of steel reinforcing bars (rebar) from Turkey and Mexico. The successful conclusion of these investigations is critical to protecting American companies and workers making rebar, including Marion's Nucor steel. This company must compete with illegally-dumped imports that are undercutting the U.S. market.



Assisting Central Ohio Workers

The loss of a job can be a devastating experience. Ohioans who work hard and play by the rules should not be left to struggle when they lose their job through no fault of their own. In February, Sen. Brown announced that approximately 75 workers at Emerson Network Power, a subsidiary of Emerson, in Delaware County, were eligible to apply for worker adjustment assistance through the U.S. Department of Labor. These resources will help ensure that displaced workers in Delaware County have the financial support and training opportunities to get a fresh start.

Protecting Ohio Jobs by Maintaining “Buy America” Provisions

In order for our economy to continue adding jobs, we must ensure American taxpayer dollars are used to support manufacturers and workers at home, not overseas.

As the House and Senate Conference Committee debated the final version of a critical water infrastructure bill, Sen. Brown urged Senate committee leaders to protect “Buy America” provisions that would support domestic manufacturers. Sen. Brown introduced and helped pass a bipartisan amendment to the Senate version of the *Water Resources Development Act* (WRDA) that would ensure that American-made iron, steel, and manufactured goods are used in federally-funded water infrastructure projects whenever they are available and priced competitively. Later in May, the Senate passed the WRRDA, which President Obama signed into law.

Helping Small Businesses Grow and Add Jobs

Supporting Job Growth by Strengthening “Buy American” Provisions



When more than \$1.5 billion a year is spent on foreign-made clothing that hurts American small businesses and impacts the domestic supply chain. The federal government should prioritize the purchase of textiles and apparel from American companies. In April, Sen. Brown toured HOMAGE, a Columbus apparel company, to outline a plan to strengthen the domestic textile industry and create jobs by ensure the U.S. government buys American and stops using taxpayer dollars to purchase products made overseas. By increasing these

requirements, we help rebuild our textile industry by boosting manufacturing and helping support small businesses like HOMAGE that rely on quality, domestic products for their clothing.

Supporting Made-in-Ohio

In July, Sen. Brown visited London's Armaly Brands, manufacturers of Brillo Steel Wool Soap Pads. Located in London since 1921, the factory has nearly 50 employees working three shifts. Sen. Brown toured the facility with plant manager Neil Parrish before meeting with local workers.



Building Central Ohio Infrastructure and Transportation

New Federal Resources to Improve Columbus Airport

In May, Sen. Brown announced that Port Columbus International Airport has been awarded a \$10 million grant from the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) to construct a new runway.

“This is great news for Columbus,” Sen. Brown said. “This addition will enhance the capacity of the Port Columbus International Airport. These federal dollars will go a long way in sustaining travel in and out of the airport for area residents and businesses.”

Redeveloping Morrow County Brownfield Sites

Ohio’s Brownfield sites can be opportunities for redevelopment and new growth. In May, Sen. Brown announced new federal funds to support environmental Brownfield site assessments in Morrow County. The funds were awarded to the Village of Mount Gilead by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency’s (EPA) Fiscal Year 2014 Brownfields Assessment, Revolving Loan Fund, and Cleanup (ARC) program. These funds will help support clean-up and decontamination efforts critical to the safety and economic success of Mount Gilead.

Repairing Critical Central Ohio Roads and Bridges



Infrastructure investments helped attract the workers, business, and investments that made America a superpower. A long-term investment in our nation’s infrastructure is vital to strengthening our nation’s economic competitiveness and ensuring that thousands of hardworking Ohioans continue to rebuild our bridges and roads. Sen. Brown joined the “Fix Our Bridges Now” bus tour for a stop at the Ohio Contractors Association (OCA) to call for a bipartisan approach to fixing America’s highways and bridges

by passing a long-term transportation bill. Unless the federal transportation bill is reauthorized, critical road and bridge projects in central Ohio could be delayed and hundreds of construction jobs could be at risk.

Repairing Dams in Fairfield County

Sen. Brown, a senior member of the Senate Agriculture Committee, announced that the United States Department of Agriculture’s (USDA) National Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) has awarded \$40,000 in funding for a watershed rehabilitation project at Upper Hocking River in Fairfield County. Upper Hocking River’s dams will be repaired in order to prevent flooding and decreased water quality from watershed run-off.

“Public health and safety are threatened if we don’t maintain our dams,” Sen. Brown said. “Structural erosion can lead to flooding and, as we have seen the past few years around Ohio, unmanaged run-off can dramatically harm water quality. These new federal resources will help protect Ohio communities from flooding and contaminated water.”

Improving Central Ohio Airports

Sen. Brown announced that Bellefontaine Regional Airport and The Ohio State University Airport in Columbus were awarded funds by the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) to conduct assessments and improvements. Funds will be used to repair taxiways. These federal dollars will go a long way in sustaining travel in and out of the airport for area residents and businesses.”

New Resources for Fairfield County Storm Water Management Project

Sen. Brown was pleased to announce that the City of Lancaster was awarded \$1.2 million for a storm water management improvement project to help the city address damage from severe storms and straight-line winds that occurred between June 29, 2012 and July 2, 2012. The funding is distributed by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security’s Federal Emergency Management Agency’s (FEMA), Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP). Storm water management includes efforts to treat, store, or otherwise control polluted storm water run-off. This results in cleaner water systems and reduced flooding during sudden rains.

Supporting Servicemembers, Veterans, and Law Enforcement

Assisting Veterans with War-Relation Injuries

When veterans seek claims for war-related injuries like post-traumatic stress (PTS) and traumatic brain injury (TBI), the burden for establishing the connection should be on the Department of Defense (DOD), not on the veteran. With nearly 300,000 American veterans struggling PTS and another 25,000 veterans facing mild Traumatic Brain Injuries (mTBI), Sen. Brown, a senior member of the Senate Veterans Affairs Committee, was in Columbus in May to outline a new plan to help active duty servicemembers better track potential exposures during deployment that could be later connected to mental health injuries and mTBI during deployments. Without proper documentation or a visible, physical injury, it is often difficult for veterans to establish a connection between injuries and military service. This lack of documentation can lead to improper medical care and increases in the disability claims backlog. Sen. Brown’s *SET Act* will ensure that DOD does a better job of tracking significant events so that retired servicemembers have full records of their service upon seeking the benefits they’ve earned at the VA.

Currently, veterans who file compensation and disability claims, or seek medical care, must provide the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) with evidence that connects their claim to previous military service. In cases and conditions, such as PTS and mTBI, veterans must provide either a written testimony from other servicemembers who witnessed the accident, provide relevant medical documentation that supports the claim, or possess military orders that prove the veteran was in a unit or location that supports the claim. These types of documentation, however, provide only a secondary account of the claim and may not fully illustrate the veteran’s claim of service connected PTS and mild TBI.

Standing Up for Ohio Veterans



With winter arriving, Sen. Brown, a senior member of the Senate Veterans Affairs Committee, outlined a plan in October that would further support the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) goal of ending veteran homelessness by 2015. Sen. Brown also announced nearly \$220,000 in new federal funding to provide rental assistance and clinical services for homeless veterans in Columbus as part of the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development-

Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing voucher program.

“Veterans who serve their country in order to protect our freedoms should never face homelessness,” Sen. Brown said. “This legislation would help Ohio veterans by providing additional resources to help keep them off the streets and start rebuilding their lives by finding transitional housing.”

Supporting and Expanding Air Mission at Rickenbacker

The men and women at Rickenbacker Air National Guard Base (ANGB) represent the best of the Ohio National Guard. Similar to any organization, it takes investment to retain and attract the best and the brightest.

In February, Sen. Brown met with Ohio Adjutant General Major Deborah Ashenhurst to discuss upcoming priorities and long-term strategic planning for Ohio’s National Guard. At the meeting, Sen. Brown expressed his support for continued air missions at Rickenbacker ANGB. MG Ashenhurst and her team at the Ohio Air National Guard understand the importance of taking the appropriate actions to ensure that Ohio’s National Guard is well- suited for continued mission success.



Welcoming Ohio Fire Chiefs to Washington D.C.



In May, Sen. Brown met with representatives of the Ohio Fire Chiefs’ Association (OFCA), the Ohio State Firefighter’s Association (OSFA), and the Ohio Society of Fire Service Instructor (OSFSI) in Washington D.C. Chiefs Jeff Klein of Perrysburg, Porter R. Welch of Sunbury, and Paul Wright of Montgomery represented the OFCA; Tim Adams of Grafton Township, Chris Peterson of Lordstown, and Mark Resanovich of Green represented OSFA; and Dave Belcher of Pickerington, Chief Brent Gates of New Concord,

and Steve Goheen and Jeremy Linn of Springfield represented OSFSI. The group attended Sen. Brown’s weekly coffee with constituents where they discussed the importance of providing hiring, training, and safety resources for fire departments.

“It was an honor to meet with fire chiefs, firefighters, and fire service instructors from Ohio communities” Sen. Brown said. “They provide a vital service for our communities and their work ensures the safety of the people of Ohio.

Announcing a New Federal Marshal for Southern District of Ohio

Sen. Brown was pleased to announce that the Senate confirmed Peter C. Tobin to serve as U.S. Marshal for the Southern District of Ohio. U.S. Marshals are nominated by the President of the United States and must be confirmed by the U.S. Senate. Following Sen. Brown’s recommendation of Tobin for the U.S. Marshal position, President Obama nominated him in August 2013.

Peter Tobin’s wealth of experience and commitment to serving others has uniquely prepared him for this position. His diverse career in law enforcement spans more than four decades and makes him an ideal public servant. A veteran of the United States Army and Ohio Army National Guard, Tobin began his career at the Columbus Police Department where he was a patrolman before eventually earning command of its SWAT Team. He has served as Chief of Police for both the Powell and London police departments, and was the Narcotics Division Chief at the Ohio Bureau of Criminal Identification. Most recently, he served as the Bureau’s Superintendent.

Applauding Dublin Middle School Students’ Initiative to Fly Veterans to Washington D.C.

In May, Sen. Brown applauded the eighth grade class at Grizzell Middle School in Dublin for raising \$20,000 to help local veterans participate in the Honor Flight program. Students began raising money after a trip to Washington, D.C. where they met with World War II veterans. As a result of their efforts, nearly 50 more veterans will travel from Columbus to Washington, D.C. on May 17 to visit the World War II, Vietnam, and Korean War memorials, Arlington National Ceremony, and the Iwo Jima memorial.

Highlighting Job Training Programs for Homeless Veterans

The men and women of the Armed Forces were made a promise that if they defend our country, a grateful nation will provide them with services and benefits they have earned. Sen. Brown was pleased to announce that the Volunteers of America of Greater Ohio, headquartered in Columbus, will receive funding from the Department of Labor’s Veterans’ Employment and Training Service (VETS) as part of its Homeless Veterans’ Reintegration Program. The funds will be used to provide job training programs to help prepare homeless veterans for civilian careers. Veterans will also have access to job placement, career counseling, housing location, and life skills and money management mentoring programs.

New Resources for Central Ohio Firefighters

Firefighters put their lives on the line each day to keep our communities safe. It is important that Ohio’s first responders have enough staff and equipment necessary to keep residents safe. Sen. Brown announced new federal resources awarded to fire departments in central Ohio for hiring by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security’s Federal Emergency Management Agency SAFER grant program. The City of Marion Fire was awarded funds to hire firefighters. With so many communities already facing budget shortfalls, critical federal efforts like SAFER are pivotal in keeping our Ohio cities, towns, and villages safe. Sen. Brown also announced new federal resources awarded to the Huntsville Fire Department in Logan County, as

well. Additionally, the following departments received new federal resources to ensure that central Ohio's skilled responders have the updated resources they need to safely do their jobs:

- Licking County: Newark Township Fire Department, St. Albans Fire Department
- Delaware County: Liberty Township Fire Department
- Fairfield County: Clearcreek Township Volunteer Fire Department
- Logan County: Macochee Joint Ambulance District

Central Ohio Students Offered Appointments to U.S. Service Academies

In March, Sen. Brown announced that three central Ohio students were offered appointments to U.S. Military Service Academies. The U.S. Air Force Academy extended Offers of Appointment to Wellington School student Josh Roseler and Watkins Memorial High School graduate Connor Severino. The U.S. Merchant Marine Academy extended an Offer of Appointment to Graham High School student Nathan Henkle. Sen. Brown nominated Roseler, Severino, and Henkle to the respective academies.

“Ohio schools are educating the young people who will become the next generation of military leaders. I am proud that Josh, Connor, and Nathan have been offered the opportunity to attend two of our nation's most prestigious institutions,” said Sen. Brown. “Their families and communities should be proud of these dynamic young men, who embody the integrity and courage needed to represent well and uphold the values of our nation.”

Each year, Sen. Brown nominates up to 10 students for each slot at our nation's service academies, which require congressional recommendations, including: the Air Force Academy; the Naval Academy; the Military Academy at West Point; and the Merchant Marine Academy. This year, because two openings were available at both the Air Force Academy and the Naval Academy, Sen. Brown nominated 20 students to those institutions. A nomination does not guarantee acceptance into a service academy. The Academy's Admissions Board ultimately decides who receives an appointment.

Protecting and Supporting Central Ohio Consumers

Call to Create Comprehensive Payday and Title-Lending Rules



In the wake of the June 2014 unanimous Ohio Supreme Court ruling on the Short Term Lending Act, which delivered a victory for payday lenders, Sen. Brown urged the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau (CFPB) to create rules to reel in payday lenders not only in Ohio, but across the country. “Because most small-dollar, short-term loans possess three of the ‘Four D’s’ that negatively affect consumers – deception, debt traps, and dead ends – the CFPB must address the full spectrum of products being offered,” wrote Sen. Brown in his letter to bureau director Richard Cordray. At the Ohio Poverty Law Center in Columbus, Sen. Brown announced his new efforts to ensure that borrowers are protected from predatory payday loan companies – especially with regard to online payday loans and installment loans - and said, “It’s time to rein in these predatory

practices. That's why I am calling on the CFPB to prevent a race to the bottom that traps Ohioans into lifetimes of debt."

Protecting Children from Accidental Liquid Nicotine Poisoning

With a 300 percent increase in accidental poisonings due to liquid nicotine in 2013 alone, Sen. Brown was in Columbus to announce a plan to protect children from accidental poisonings and death from liquid nicotine. Marketed with flavors appealing to children like "Cotton Candy," "Fruity Loops," and "Gummi Bear," small containers of liquid nicotine—used for electronic cigarettes—contain enough nicotine to kill four small children. While children are protected from bleach, aspirin, and mouthwash with child-proof packaging, current liquid nicotine packages are not required to be child resistant.



At Columbus Public Health, Sen. Brown announced the *Child Nicotine Poisoning Prevention Act*. Sen. Brown's bipartisan legislation would give the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) the authority and direction to improve liquid nicotine packaging in ways that would prevent accidental poisoning of children.

Preventing Injuries and Calling for Stronger Shopping Cart Safety Standards



With more than 24,000 children visiting the emergency room each year due to shopping cart-related injuries, more must be done to ensure tip-overs and falls are reduced. Sen. Brown was in Columbus to call on the CPSC to pursue more stringent safety standards, as well as to increase public awareness of the potential dangers of shopping cart related injuries. Sen. Brown was joined by Dr. Gary Smith, lead researcher and founder of the Center for Injury Research and Policy at Nationwide Children's Hospital. Dr. Smith highlighted findings from

a recent study conducted at Nationwide Children's Hospital that found that the number of concussions and closed-head injuries associated with shopping carts has continued to rise in recent years. According to the study, one child is treated in an emergency room every 22 minutes for injuries sustained from a shopping cart. With nearly 70 percent of injuries resulting from falls, Dr. Smith pointed to recommendations made in the study to help improve shopping cart safety.

Fighting Superbugs in Ohio

We have made far too many advances in modern medicine to lose the fight to superbugs. Carbapenem-resistant Enterobacteriaceae, also known as CRE or the "nightmare bacteria," have become resistant to most available antibiotics. Infections with these germs are very difficult to treat, and can be deadly—one report cites they contribute to death in as many as 50 percent of infected patients. Sen. Brown visited Columbus to outline a plan to combat antibiotic-resistant infections, which affect more than two million Americans each year. The STAAR Act would strengthen the federal response to antibiotic resistance by promoting prevention and control,

tracking drug-resistant bacteria, and supporting enhanced research efforts, as well as improving the development, use, and stewardship of antibiotics.

Supporting Social Security, Medicare, and Health Care

Dedicating OSU's James Cancer Hospital

In November, Sen. Brown joined community leaders and representatives from The Ohio State University (OSU) to celebrate the dedication of OSU's James Cancer Hospital and Solove Research Institute. More than 5,000 Ohioans worked on constructing the facility, and the project is expected to create 4,000 full-time jobs in central Ohio – including 1,000 permanent research and health care professional positions at the medical center alone. In December 2010, Sen. Brown helped secure \$100 million for the project through a competitive grant program created by the health law. The funding enabled Ohio State to undertake its largest construction project in the University's history, expanding the Wexner Medical Center and the James Cancer Hospital and Solove Research Institute.



Alerting Central Ohioans of Local Resources Available to Help Enroll in New Health Insurance Marketplace

With the deadline for Ohioans to enroll for health care approaching, Sen. Brown joined the “Countdown to Get Covered” bus tour for a stop at Columbus State Community College. Sen. Brown called attention to local resources available for central Ohio residents planning to purchase health insurance through the new health insurance marketplace. At the event, local navigators took appointments and walk-in meetings to help local citizens enroll in an affordable, high-quality health plan.

Increasing Access to Drug Treatment for People Addicted to Opiates



With 1,914 Ohioans dying from drug overdoses in 2012, Sen. Brown visited the Alcohol, Drug, and Mental Health (ADAMH) Board of Franklin County to announce a plan to help fight the scourge of opiate abuse wreaking havoc throughout Ohio. Opioid overdose, including death from both prescription pain relievers and heroin, has increased dramatically – claiming more American lives than car accidents. Efforts to assist those suffering from addiction is undermined by a lack of treatment for people who are opioid dependent or addicted. Sen. Brown announced his support for *The Recovery Enhancement for Addiction Treatment Act* (TREAT Act), legislation that would change U.S. law to enable more health care providers to treat larger numbers of patients struggling with addiction.

Pressing For More Effective Sunscreens

There are more than two million cases of skin cancer in the United States each year and 90 percent are the result of harmful sun exposure. While sunscreen is used by consumers to prevent

burns and skin damage, Americans do not have access to the most advanced sunscreen that Canadians and those in the EU do. That's why Sen. Brown cosponsored bipartisan legislation to protect Ohioans from the effects of harmful exposure to the sun, including skin cancer. The bill, which Congress passed earlier this year, was signed by the President in November. The new law will strengthen the potency of U.S. sunscreen—at no cost to taxpayers—by expediting the bureaucratic review process of stronger sun protection products already available to consumers in Canada and the European Union (EU), but not the United States. The law will also support Ohio companies, like Ashland, Inc. which has a factory in Columbus. For more than a dozen years, the company has produced Escalol S, a “filter” ingredient that protects against both UVA and UVB rays. The more effective ingredient is sold to sunscreen producers across the world, but not in the United States.

New Federal Funds for Community Health Center Development in Columbus

In April, Sen. Brown announced that Lower Light Christian Health Center, a medical home serving Franklin County, received new resources from the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) to support and develop primary care health services.

“Community health centers play a vital role in helping Ohioans obtain access to primary and preventive health care services,” said Sen. Brown. “These new federal resources will help Lower Light Christian Health Center provide affordable and accessible health care to more of Franklin County’s children, seniors, and parents.”

Promoting Senior Health Care in Knox County

It can often be difficult for rural communities to fully fund critical infrastructure projects. Sen. Brown announced new federal resources that will allow for the construction a new Skilled Nursing Facility in Knox County. Ohio Eastern Star Home will receive a loan from the United States Department of Agriculture’s (USDA) Rural Development branch’s Community Facility Loan program.

The Ohio Eastern Star Home provides aging adults in Knox County with independent and assisted living facilities as well as a health care center. Its new facility will have four “Health Care Neighborhoods” with common areas and 62 private units. It will replace 2 older wings, while also adding staff and administrative support areas.

New Federal Funds for Head Start Programs

In April, Sen. Brown announced new federal funds to support Head Start and Early Head Start programs run by Pickaway County Community Action Organization, an agency in Circleville, dedicated to helping people in poverty, Community Action Program Commission of Lancaster, an agency that focuses on helping low-income families and individuals, and Community Action Commission of Fayette County, an agency in Washington Court House that fights poverty through the expansion of community services. The funds were awarded by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

“This is excellent news for central Ohio families and their children,” Sen. Brown said. “Head Start and Early Head Start ensure that children have the skills they need to succeed in elementary school and beyond.”

Head Start is a federal program that provides young children from low-income families with programming to prepare them for school. Early Head Start focuses on children ages birth to three. These programs, including health, nutrition, and social services, are designed to ensure their healthy cognitive, social, and emotional development.

Welcoming Advocates for People Fighting Lou Gehrig’s Disease to Washington D.C.

In May, Sen. Brown met with central Ohio representatives of the ALS Association, an organization advocating for people living with amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS), also known as Lou Gehrig’s disease. The group attended Sen. Brown’s weekly coffee with constituents during its visit to Washington, D.C. for National ALS Advocacy Day.

“It was an honor to meet with Ohioans working with the ALS Association,” Sen. Brown said. “Their work is critical for the many Americans who suffer from this devastating disease.”

Advocating for Minority Communities

Addressing Infant Mortality Prevention

Ohio leads the nation in African American infant mortality and is third in the nation for infant mortality in general. To help tackle this, Sen. Brown authored the *Sudden Unexpected Death Data Enhancement and Awareness Act*, legislation that aims to enhance the current system used to report on infant and childhood deaths as a way of improving prevention by helping doctors and researchers, specifically the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the National Institutes of Health, to better understand the causes of stillbirths, Sudden Unexpected Infant Deaths (SUID), and Sudden Unexplained Deaths in Childhood (SUDC). The bill was introduced in the Senate by Sens. Brown and Ayotte, and in the House by Rep. Pallone, Jr. but has been in legislative limbo for the past six years. However, on December 3, 2014, the legislation passed the House and the Senate and was sent to the President for his signature into law.



HUD Choice Neighborhood Announcement

In June, the Department of Housing and Urban Development’s (HUD) Secretary, Shaun Donovan, announced the award of nearly \$30 million in federal funds to the Columbus Metropolitan Housing Association (CMHA). The grant from HUD’s FY2013 Choice Neighborhoods Implementation program will be used by the CMHA to revitalize a major section of the Near East Side of Columbus by ensuring affordable housing and helping to attract additional economic development. The HUD Choice Neighborhoods program allows struggling neighborhoods to transform their public or HUD-assisted housing through locally developed strategies. This announcement follows the letter of support sent by Sen. Brown to HUD Assistant Secretary Sandra Henriquez, asking her to consider the CMHA’s grant application.

“By building high-quality, mixed-income housing, local leaders can help revitalize this community and help attract new economic development and jobs.” Sen. Brown said, “I applaud Secretary Donovan for his support of this project. This investment shows a strong commitment

by HUD to helping local communities transform into safe, modern areas that ensure affordable housing for local residents and attract additional development.”

Furthermore, the CMHA will use the federal funds for the Near East Side neighborhood’s revitalization project through the Partners Achieving Community Transformation (PACT) initiative, a partnership between the CMHA, The Ohio State University, and the City of Columbus. PACT plans to develop mixed-income housing that can serve up to 350 families and more than 100 seniors. Additionally, PACT, along with Urban Strategies and Columbus Cities Schools, will also aid residents of all ages in finding resources for education, child care, job training, and health care. Finally, investments from local businesses will allow PACT to provide area residents with access to community services, such as a fire station and community centers.

Strengthening Voter Protections

We should be removing barriers to the ballot, not creating them. One week before Election Day,



Sen. Brown and Rep. Joyce Beatty called for passage of legislation aimed at restoring and expanding basic voting protections under the Voting Rights Act. At Bethel AME Church in Columbus, Sen. Brown and Rep. Beatty were joined by Pastor Dale Snyder – along with leaders from the Interdominational Ministerial Alliance, the Baptist Ministerial Alliance, and the Baptist Pastors Conference – to call for passage of the *Voting Rights Amendment Act of 2014*. This bipartisan, bicameral bill is in response to efforts by the U.S. Supreme Court to weaken key provisions of the Voting Rights Act of 1965.

Listening to Leaders in the African American Community

Senator Sherrod Sen. Brown was joined by Congresswoman Joyce Beatty with African American leaders representing the faith-based community, civic and nonprofit sectors during a meeting hosted by the Columbus Urban League. Participants outlined opportunities for government, private, and nonprofit organizations to collaborate and utilize federal resources to confront challenges facing Ohioans. Participants also shared their ongoing efforts to improve the outlook in the African American community in areas including workforce development, infant mortality, health care, and education.



Strengthening Central Ohio Neighborhoods: Keeping Ohio Families in Their Homes

Working to Revitalize Central Ohio’s Blighted Communities

Our local communities need more resources to address the scourge of blighted properties that undermine surrounding property values, drain local resources, and threaten the safety and security of our neighborhoods. Sen. Brown announced that Hardest Hit Funds (HHF) were awarded to the Central Ohio Community Improvement Corporation to demolish vacant and

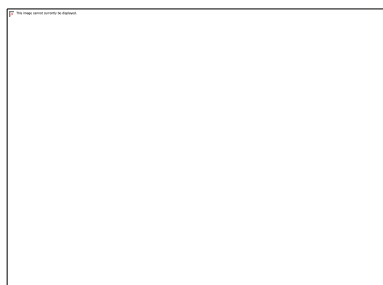
abandoned properties. As part of the Neighborhood Initiative Program (NIP), these funds represent a portion of the \$570 million in Ohio HHF that Sen. Brown helped secure in 2010 as a member of the Senate Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs. These demolition funds are a critical step forward in rebuilding central Ohio neighborhoods devastated by the housing crisis. The Neighborhood Initiative Program will go a long way towards meeting that need and stabilizing local neighborhoods.

Protecting Marion County from Drastic Increases in Flood Insurance Policies

With more than 263 residents of Marion County potentially facing drastic increases in the price of their flood insurance, Sen. Brown applauded passage of a new bipartisan bill that would protect Ohioans from huge flood insurance premiums increases. Sen. Brown fought to pass the bipartisan *Homeowner Flood Insurance Affordability Act*, which was passed by the Senate on March 13th and was signed into law by the President on March 25th.

This law ensures that Ohioans from Marion County no longer face the uncertainty of steep increases in their flood insurance policies or the devastating effect of having their property value decrease because of inaccurate mapping. Ohioans who live in or near flood plains should not be forced to pay exorbitant premiums to protect their piece of the American dream.

Helping Rebuild Central Ohio Communities



Following the recent, record-setting \$16.65 billion settlement between Bank of America and the U.S. Department of Justice to resolve widespread homeowner abuses, Sen. Brown called on Bank of America to direct part of the settlement's consumer relief funds to revitalize Ohio neighborhoods.

Sen. Brown visited Franklinton, a neighborhood in Columbus, to release a letter – co-signed by Sen. Portman – to Bank of America. In the letter, Sens. Brown and Portman outlined the devastating impact the housing crisis had on Ohio communities and the role these funds would play in revitalizing Ohio's hardest hit communities through blight elimination, home rehabilitation, and foreclosure prevention.

Federal Funds for Service Programs in Columbus

AmeriCorps service members volunteer to help their neighbors, support local military families, and educate communities. Their critical work helps build stronger communities and uplift Ohioans. Sen. Brown announced that federal funds were awarded to AmeriCorps PATH (Prevention Awareness of Trafficking Humans) by the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS) to support AmeriCorps service programs. This funding will allow for 20 more AmeriCorps volunteers to serve in Columbus. AmeriCorps PATH is run by the Office of Criminal Justice Services and City Year Columbus is run by the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS) to support AmeriCorps service programs. This funding will allow for 36 more AmeriCorps volunteers to serve in Columbus. City Year Columbus is a branch of City Year, Inc., an organization dedicated to providing students at risk of dropping out with academic, emotional, and social support.

Supporting Central Ohio's Agricultural and Rural Economy

Boosting Ohio's Biobased Manufacturing Industry

The biobased industry connects two of Ohio's strongest sectors – agriculture and manufacturing. With one in seven jobs related to food and agriculture in Ohio, finding ways to create new markets and investments is key to creating jobs and promoting economic growth. In January, Sen. Brown and Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack highlighted the 2014 Farm Bill and a new initiative aimed at expanding Ohio's biobased economy. Sen. Brown and Sec. Vilsack visited Plastic Suppliers, Inc., an industry-leading company that makes plastic film from biobased materials, to outline how passage of the 2014 Farm Bill will create manufacturing and agriculture jobs through increased biobased procurement and promotion.



Working for Ohio Farmers in Washington

In recognition for his efforts to pass the 2014 Farm Bill, Sen. Brown received the Ohio Soybean Associations legislator of the year award. Sen. Brown was joined by Jerry Bambauer, President of the Ohio Soybean Association, and Bret Davis, a Delaware County soybean farmer and Board Chair of Ohio Soybean Association.

“It’s crucial that Ohio farmers have the resources they need while saving taxpayers’ money,” Sen. Brown said. “This Farm Bill achieved that balance and the members of the Ohio Soybean Association helped to push this bill across the finish line.

Representing Ohio farmers is an honor, and I thank the Ohio Soybean Association for its recognition as legislator of the year.”



Protecting American Dairy and Cheese Producers

Ohio dairy producers make some of the highest quality cheese in the world. Their product is as good as any from Europe and should be given equal opportunity to compete in the food market. With Ohio ranking 10th in overall domestic cheese production, Sens. Brown and Portman are working to protect Ohio dairy farmers and producers from a European initiative that would change common names for cheeses frequently purchased by American consumers. Their efforts would protect producers like Worthington's J&G Cheese Co. which produces and distributes Edam, Gouda, parmesan, Muenster, provolone, and Romano cheeses. In a bipartisan letter signed by more than 50 of their Senate colleagues, Sens. Brown and Portman urged the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) and the United States Trade Representative (USTR) to fight European Union (EU) efforts to prohibit American dairy producers from using dozens of common cheese names. The EU claims that dairy products bearing names such as asiago, feta, parmesan, and Muenster are “geographical indicators” and can only be appropriately displayed on products made in certain areas of Europe.

OSU Professor Appointed to Board of USDA Research Foundation

In July, Sen. Brown applauded the United States Department of Agriculture's (USDA) appointment of Dr. Yehia Mohamed "Mo" Saif, Professor Emeritus at The Ohio State University (OSU), to the board of directors of its new Foundation for Food and Agricultural Research (FFAR). Dr. Saif, a retired professor, taught in the Department of Veterinary Preventive Medicine in the College of Veterinary Medicine. He now conducts research for OSU's Ohio Agricultural Research and Development Center's (OARDC) Food Animal Health Research Program.

"Dr. Saif has excellent experience in both veterinary medicine and agricultural research and will do well advising the Department of Agriculture on these matters," Sen. Brown said. "His appointment is a testament to leadership of Ohio's citizens and the exceptional research conducted at Ohio's universities."

New Federal Funds Announced for Agricultural Research and Development

Small businesses in Ohio are hubs for innovation, but they often require help raising the capital needed for research and development. Sen. Brown – a senior member of the Senate Agriculture Committee – announced the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA) has awarded Columbus-based MetaMateria Technologies, LLC \$100,000, as part of its Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) program. NIFA's SBIR program provides small businesses with resources for agricultural research and development. MetaMateria Technologies will use this funding to advance conservation of soil and water resources. These federal resources will allow MetaMateria to develop new breakthroughs in water and soil conservation that will serve consumers across the state and nation.

Other Central Ohio Highlights

Welcoming Ohioans to Washington D.C.

In May, Sen. Brown met with Beth Kowalski, Marjory Pizzuti, and Lindsey Thieken; representatives of Goodwill Columbus during his weekly coffee with constituents. The group was in Washington, D.C. advocating for people with disabilities.

"It was an honor to meet with Goodwill Columbus," Sen. Brown said. "This organization's work is critical in aiding the many Americans with developmental disabilities find meaningful employment."

Sen. Brown also met with Jefferson Awards for Public Service recipients Anita Birk and Rich Gandarillas of Columbus during their visit to Washington. Birk received recognition for starting Mommies of Miracles (MOM), an online support group for mothers whose children have developmental or other health care needs. Gandarillas received the award for his work mentoring youth through Big Brothers Big Sisters of America.

In July, Sen. Brown met with Filip Jotevski, a Columbus native and University of Cincinnati student interning at the United Macedonian Diaspora in Washington, D.C. Sen. Brown also met with Marcus Andrews, a Reynoldsburg native and rising junior at The Ohio State University (OSU). Andrews is an OSU John Glenn Fellow and is interning in Washington, D.C. this

summer for The Normandy Group, LLC, a government relations firm. Sen. Brown met with Andrews at his weekly coffee with constituents in Washington, D.C.

In November, Sen. Brown met with Dr. Wayne Trout of Hilliard, a representative of the American Congress of Obstetricians and Gynecologists (ACOG). Dr. Trout attended Sen. Brown's weekly coffee with constituents where he thanked him for introducing the *Ensuring Access to Primary Care for Women and Children Act*, legislation that would help ensure the 62 million Americans who depend on Medicaid can maintain access to primary care. Sen. Brown also met with Nick Lascu, a Cleveland native and senior at The Ohio State University (OSU), where he majors in public affairs with a specialization in urban policy management. Lascu is an OSU John Glenn Fellow and is interning in Washington, D.C. this semester.

In 2014, Sen. Brown also welcomed Ohio students who interned in his Capitol Hill office. Students from Grove City, Worthington, and New Albany served as legislative interns working alongside staff members to address constituent request and concerns. In Washington, D.C., a typical day could include speaking with constituents on the phone, greeting visitors to the office, organizing incoming correspondence, attending Senate committee hearings and briefings, and leading tours of the U.S. Capitol Building.

Congratulating Otterbein's Class of 2014

In May, Sen. Brown joined students, parents, and faculty at Otterbein University's spring commencement ceremony.

"Each of you has great talent; otherwise you wouldn't have been admitted to Otterbein to begin with. Each of you has a good work-ethic; otherwise you wouldn't be going across this stage later today. Each of you cares about your community; otherwise Otterbein wouldn't be recognized year after year for your service to others," Sen. Brown said during his speech. "Your struggles will inform you, and your perseverance will carry you."

New Federal Funds for Head Start Programs in Knox County

In July, Sen. Brown announced new federal funds to support Head Start and Early Head Start programs run by Knox County Head Start. The funds were awarded by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. "This is excellent news for Knox County families and their children," Sen. Brown said. "Head Start and Early Head Start ensure that children have the skills they need to succeed in elementary school and beyond."

Central Ohio Students Selected as White House Interns

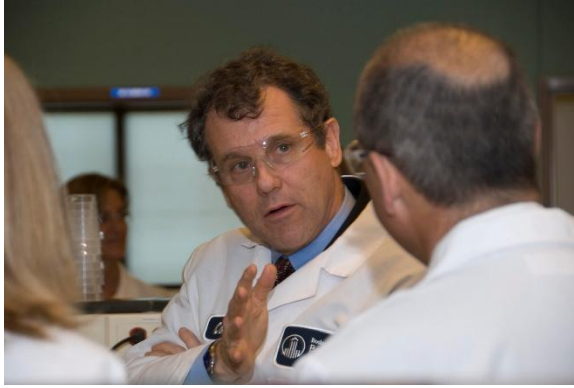
Sen. Brown announced that the White House has selected Mallory Rohr, of Grove City, and Sarah Montell, of Lewis Center, as two of nearly 150 participants in the 2014 White House Internship Program.

"Ohio is home to strong schools, families, and communities that have helped to equip young Ohioans like Mallory and Sarah with the skills needed to lead," Sen. Brown said. "Mallory and Sarah's families and communities should be proud of these driven young women who embody the integrity and intellectual insight needed to succeed in the White House."

Northeast Ohio Regional Highlights

Creating Jobs and Promoting Economic Development

Saving Manufacturing Jobs to Fight Shortages of Lifesaving Drugs



In October 2013, Ben Venue, headquartered in Bedford, announced that it would stop production of Doxorubicin (or “Doxil”) by the end of 2013 and phase out jobs through 2014. But according to the Society of Health-System Pharmacists (ASHP), there is a shortage of Doxil, a cancer-fighting drug used in chemotherapy that is made at the Bedford facility. A temporary agreement was reached that would enable a prescription drug maker, Johnson and Johnson (J&J), to lease portions of the facility and continue producing

Doxil while retaining Bedford jobs.

In January, Sen. Brown urged the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) to continue to work towards keeping the Ben Venue laboratory in Bedford open and finding the laboratory a permanent manufacturer in order to combat shortages of life saving drugs and protect local jobs.

“The temporary agreement to continue producing Doxil in Bedford is encouraging,” Sen. Brown said. “With current drug shortages and the need for manufacturing jobs in northeast Ohio, I will continue to work with the FDA and the City of Bedford to find a permanent solution for the facility.”

Sen. Brown also called on the CEO of Ben Venue Laboratories’ parent company to continue to work towards finding a permanent manufacturer for the Bedford facility. During his conversation with Paul Fonteyne, U.S. CEO of Boehringer Ingelheim (BI) Pharmaceuticals, Sen. Brown urged the company not to withdraw from Bedford in a manner that would prioritize profit margin at the expense of combating shortages of life saving drugs, protecting local jobs, and rewarding the city for its 80 years of loyalty.

In July, Sen. Brown and Rep. Marcia Fudge applauded an announcement by Boehringer Ingelheim (BI) Pharmaceuticals—the parent company of Ben Venue Laboratories—that it found a permanent manufacturer for its Bedford facility. The news followed months of efforts by Sen. Brown and Rep. Fudge urging the company to do everything in its power to find a buyer that would continue manufacturing in Bedford. As a result, local jobs will be protected and people undergoing treatment for conditions such as cancer will have greater access to life saving drugs.

“This is excellent news for the health of citizens across the country as well as the economy of Bedford and northeast Ohio,” Sen. Brown said. “A permanent buyer for the Bedford facility means cancer patients can receive the lifesaving drugs they need. It also means that Bedford

citizens can continue to work and provide for their families. For 80 years, the city of Bedford has been loyal to Ben Venue and BI. Today, its dedication was rewarded.

New Funding for Research at University of Akron

Research in science and engineering is critical to creating jobs and improving our economy. Sen. Brown was pleased to announce a National Science Foundation (NSF) Award to the University of Akron to support research in science and engineering. The University of Akron is one of Ohio's premier universities. This award will help it advance knowledge of polymer science, a field in which Akron is already among the world's best. The NSF award will be used for the project, "CAREER: Ultrasensitive Solution-Processed Inverted Infrared Polymer Photodetectors." Its objective is to design, fabricate, and optimize specific ultrasensitive solution-processed polymer photodetectors.

Extending and Enhancing Tax Credit to Help Promote Economic Opportunity

Working Americans deserve policies that can help them lift themselves out of poverty and keep more of their hard-earned wages. That's why Sen. Brown has always supported the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC). In January 2014, Brown visited Cleveland to announce a bill that would strengthen EITC. In conjunction with raising the federal minimum wage, Sen. Brown called for passage of the *Working Families Tax Relief Act* which would make permanent enhancements to the EITC and expand its eligibility to workers without children. As we continue our economic recovery, it's vital that we pursue policies that promote work and provide ladders of opportunity to more Ohioans. In 2012, nearly 868,000 Ohio households received a lump sum refundable credit through the EITC after they filed their taxes.

Applauding Ford's Announcement to Return and Create Jobs in Northeast Ohio



One in every six cars produced in the United States is made in Ohio, due to the quality of our workforce. Sen. Brown applauded Ford's March 2014 announcement that it will invest \$168 million into its Ohio Assembly Plant. The investment will enable Ford to shift production from Mexico and retool its Cleveland area plant to produce the company's all-new 2016 F-650 and F-750 medium-duty trucks. Ford's announcement is excellent news for northeast Ohio workers and the one in every eight Ohio jobs connected to our proud auto industry. Bringing production back to the United States from Mexico will strengthen our state's growing economy and make our local manufacturing base even stronger. In early 2009, Sen. Brown was a strong advocate for the American auto rescue which helped protect Ohio's auto supply chain, for which Ford plays a significant role.

Calling for a National Network of Manufacturing Innovation

Manufacturing is the backbone of Ohio's economy. For our state to continue creating jobs, we must build on the momentum of our local manufacturing hubs and create a National Network of Manufacturing Innovation to ensure the United States is at the forefront of advanced manufacturing, with Ohio leading the way. Following a regional meeting of the White House Advanced Manufacturing Partnership (AMP), Sen. Brown renewed his call for Congress to pass two pieces of legislation he introduced that would establish a National Network of Manufacturing

Innovation (NNMI) and punish countries that hurt American manufacturers by manipulating their currency. The meeting in Akron featured University of Akron President, Luis Proenza; and United Steelworkers (USW) International President, Leo Gerard.

Spurring U.S. Film Production to Create Jobs

Ohio has always been at the forefront of creativity and innovation. Our film supply chain is another example that Ohio knows how to make things. Movie and TV studios contribute nearly 33,000 jobs and more than \$1 billion to our economy. With the cinema and television industries contributing nearly 33,000 jobs and more than \$1.1 billion to Ohio's economy, Sen. Brown helped include a provision to the *Expiring Provisions Improvement Reform and Efficiency (EXPIRE) Act*, legislation passed by the Senate Finance Committee. The provision would extend a tax credit for productions that film 75 percent of their product or more in the United States. Sen. Brown's efforts follow the Cleveland premiere of the new "Captain America" film that was predominantly shot in Ohio. In order to continue creating jobs and growing our local economy, we should do everything we can to give studios incentives to make their films here in the United States.

Connecting Job Seekers with Manufacturers

For many, manufacturing has been a ticket to the middle class. Manufacturing jobs ensure that northeast Ohioans have more job opportunities and that local manufacturers have the skilled workforce they need to complete. In May, Sen. Brown co-hosted a "Careers in Manufacturing Summit" at Cuyahoga Community College (Tri-C) to connect northeast Ohio job seekers with local manufacturers looking for workers. Throughout the day, nearly 60 employers had the opportunity to meet with prospective employees and learn about resources to help them hire and train workers. This summit connected manufacturers hiring workers, with close to 800 workers seeking manufacturing jobs or training. This strengthens our economy by ensuring northeast Ohioans have more job opportunities and that local manufacturers have the skilled workforce they need to compete. Sen. Brown co-hosted his summit with Tri-C, the Manufacturing Advocacy and Growth Network (MAGNET), Ohio Means Jobs Cleveland-Cuyahoga, and the Cleveland Society for Human Resource Management.



Enhancing Manufacturing Education and Training for Better Jobs

In May, Sen. Brown was pleased to announce new federal funds to support Youngstown State University's Virtual Advanced Manufacturing Equipment Network initiative. The funds were awarded by the Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) to purchase 3-D printers as part of an educational laboratory where students and local manufacturing employees can learn additive manufacturing skills while providing support services for local manufacturers.



The Network will consist of Youngstown State University, AST2, the Youngstown Business Incubator (YBI), Eastern Gateway Community College, and America Makes, formerly the National Additive Manufacturing Innovation Institute (NAMII). Public-private partnerships like this leverage resources to provide local business with skilled workers and provide Ohioans with the training they need for high paying, high-tech manufacturing jobs.

Announcing Confirmation of Former Youngstown Mayor to Administration Post

In May, Sen. Brown announced the Senate confirmation of Mahoning Valley native and former Youngstown mayor Jay Williams to a key Administration post. In December 2013, Sen. Brown introduced Williams at a confirmation hearing of the Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works (EPW). The Senate confirmed Williams as Assistant Secretary for Economic Development at the U.S. Department of Commerce (DOC).

“I congratulate Jay Williams on his confirmation and know that he will continue to serve his country and hometown honorably,” Sen. Brown said. “As President Obama’s former top advisor for auto communities, Jay understands how to strengthen our economy and was instrumental in helping communities take the next steps following the auto rescue. I look forward to working with Jay on the important task of creating jobs and economic opportunity for our country and the Mahoning Valley.”

Working to Strengthen Northeast Ohio’s Economy

Our manufacturing abilities helped build the economy of northeast Ohio and its middle class. In June, Sen. Brown visited the Canton Rotary Club to highlight his efforts to create jobs in Stark County and strengthen the economy of northeast Ohio. During his visit, Sen. Brown called for Congress to pass his bipartisan manufacturing jobs bill that would create thousands of high paying, high-tech manufacturing jobs as well as a long-term highway bill to help fix Stark County’s 41 structurally deficient bridges.

Expediting Decision on Pensions for Delphi Salaried Retirees

Sen. Brown along with Reps. Marcia Fudge, Marcy Kaptur, and Tim Ryan urged the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) to take immediate actions that would expedite a ruling on the pensions of Delphi Salaried Retirees. In their letter to DOL Secretary Thomas Perez, the lawmakers called for the Secretary to intervene and ensure that the Pension Benefit Guarantee Corporation (PBGC) makes its final determination as soon as possible.

In July, Sen. Brown applauded a district court ruling that directs the Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation (PBGC) to release all documents that the Delphi Salaried Retirees Association (DSRA) requests in its lawsuit to restore the full pensions of its members.

Restarting and Upgrading Mahoning Valley Plant

In July, Sen. Brown and Rep. Tim Ryan applauded a ruling by the Public Utilities Commission of Ohio (PUCO) that would help protect hundreds of Mahoning Valley jobs. PUCO agreed to a “Reasonable Arrangement” that will reduce energy costs for the Warren Steel Holdings company

and enable it to remain competitive. The ruling follows Sen. Brown's and Rep. Ryan's effort earlier in the summer to urge PUCO to take this action for the well-being of the Valley and its workers.

"This is excellent news for Mahoning Valley workers and the local economy," Sen. Brown said. "A plant closure would have cost the region hundreds of jobs and employees would have lost \$53 million in compensation. By approving a fair electricity rate, the Valley will avoid job loss and potentially see new jobs created in the future. PUCO made the right decision, and as a result, the Mahoning Valley will be strengthened."

Providing Academic and Job Skills Training for At-Risk Youth

Helping young people get a foothold in the workforce is critical to Ohio's long-term success. We must pay special attention to at-risk youth and ensure they have the opportunity to get a good education and the job skills they need to succeed. In August, Sen. Brown announced that Project REBUILD, Inc. in Canton was awarded federal funding to provide academic and job skills training for at-risk youth by the U.S. Department of Labor's YouthBuild program. YouthBuild is an alternative education program for students between the ages of 16 and 24 who have been in the juvenile justice system, are aging out of foster care, have dropped out of high school, or have other risk factors that could prevent them from reaching key educational and career milestones.

Saving Jobs at Warren Steel Holdings

Sen. Brown and Rep. Tim Ryan applauded the August restart of the Warren Steel Holdings company. The company's new production follows the successful efforts by Sen. Brown and Rep. Ryan to urge the Public Utilities Commission of Ohio (PUCO) to agree to a "Reasonable Arrangement" that would reduce energy costs for the company and enable it to remain competitive. In July, PUCO agreed to this request and Warren Steel Holdings announced that it would reopen its facility, saving hundreds of Mahoning Valley jobs in the process.

Working to Keep U.S. Postal Service Processing Centers and Protect Jobs in Akron and Youngstown Open

With the United States Postal Service (USPS) Processing and Distribution Centers in Akron and Youngstown scheduled to close in 2015, Sen. Brown, along with 49 other senators, sent a letter to the Chairmen and Ranking Members of the United States Senate Committee on Appropriations and the Subcommittee on Financial Services and General Government, urging them to prevent the planned closing and consolidation of several USPS mail processing facilities across the country. To cut costs, USPS plans to close 82 mail processing facilities in 2015, eliminating up to 15,000 jobs and slowing down service delivery.

The senators asked the Committee and Subcommittee to prevent all closings and consolidations in Fiscal Year 2015 through omnibus appropriations legislation or a continuing resolution, giving Congress time to pass comprehensive postal reform legislation to fund the Postal Service's operations.

"Closing Akron's and Youngstown's mail processing facility will deprive the community of hundreds of good-paying jobs, making it difficult for families to make ends meet," Sen. Brown

said. “Immediate action needs to be taken so workers can keep their jobs and continue providing reliable service for the cities.”

Sen. Brown also recently joined 29 colleagues in a letter to Postmaster General Patrick Donahoe urging the U.S. Postal Service (USPS) to delay consolidation of up to 82 mail processing facilities nationally. The letter to Donahoe follows a report by the U.S. Postal Service, Office of Inspector General that found the USPS failed to fulfill its obligations to study the impact of consolidation and properly notify local customers of these changes.

Highlighting Ohio Manufacturing

Sen. Brown joined U.S. Trade Representative Michael Froman in October to tout Ohio’s all-time high export numbers and outline his priorities for a trade agenda that is fair to workers and strengthens Ohio’s manufacturing industry. Sen. Brown and Froman toured Jet Incorporated, a



small business in Cleveland that is creating jobs by designing, manufacturing, and exporting innovative wastewater treatment systems to 33 countries all over the world. Sen. Brown and Froman also highlighted new data released last month indicating that both Cleveland and Columbus account for a large share of Ohio’s export-supported jobs. More than one quarter of all Ohio manufacturing workers depend on exports for their jobs.

Celebrating the Success of the Ohio-Made Chevy Cruze

For the past 50 years, workers in Lordstown have made the Chevy plant GM’s largest in the U.S. and one of the most productive in North America. As we celebrate the more than one million Chevy Cruzes produced in Lordstown, we’re proving the naysayers wrong. Sen. Brown joined workers from UAW Locals 1112 and 1714 to announce the winner of the one-millionth Chevrolet Cruze built at Lordstown Complex recently. Sen. Brown is a longtime advocate for the auto industry and the Lordstown GM plant. In September 2009, Sen. Brown visited the Lordstown facility with President Obama, and in November of 2008, he introduced the *Auto Industry Emergency Bridge Loan Act*, with a bipartisan group of colleagues.



Protecting American Steel Producers

Sen. Brown, along with Sen. John D. Rockefeller IV, recently called for ITC Chair Meredith Broadbent to move the investigation forward and address the influx unfairly traded certain welded line pipe imports from Korea and Turkey. The senators noted that while production of oil and gas has increased in the U.S., the domestic steel industry has not benefited from the increased demand because of artificially low imports. The senators urged the International Trade Commission (ITC) to support the American steel producers – like Warren’s Energex/JMC and Brookfield’s TMK IPSCO – by pursuing an investigation into illegally dumped imports of Welded Line Pipe.

Strengthening Trade Enforcement to Protect Northeast Ohio Jobs

Defending Ohio Steel Producers from Illegal Trade Practices



Sen. Brown joined with Sen. Portman to applaud an announcement by the U.S. Department of Commerce (DOC) that it will protect Ohio-based companies like U.S. Steel in Lorain and Vallourec Star in Youngstown from illegal Chinese trade practices by maintaining antidumping duties and countervailing duties on Chinese steel pipe imports. Prior to the decision, Sen. Brown and Sen. Portman urged DOC to rule in favor of domestic steel manufacturers on a petition regarding product coverage for duties order on Oil Country Tubular Goods from China. DOC's ruling is excellent news for Ohio's workers and manufacturers and makes it clear that countries like China can't use loopholes to circumvent international law and evade anti-dumping and countervailing duties.

In March, Sen. Brown met with U.S. Steel President and CEO Mario Longhi to discuss efforts to strengthen trade enforcement and protect American steelworkers and businesses. After the meeting, Sen. Brown, who is Co-Chair of the Senate Steel Caucus, urged the Administration to hold foreign competitors accountable for unfair trade practices that hurt American manufacturers.

In April, Sen. Brown and Sen. Portman worked together again to urge the DOC to protect domestic diamond saw blade companies from unfair Chinese trade practices. DOC is currently determining appropriate tariffs for Chinese diamond saw blades to prevent dumping into the U.S. market. In order to protect American jobs and companies like Elyria's Diamond Products, Sen. Brown and Sen. Portman called for DOC to utilize all available data to come to a fair and accurate conclusion.

"We urge the Department to reconsider which financial data to use, consistent with U.S. trade law, to ensure that the Department is able to accurately calculate the margin of dumping," the Senators wrote. "Moreover, as a general matter, we urge the Department to disregard financial statements from companies that use prison labor, as such financial data distorts the full cost of production and sales."

In May, Sen. Brown and Sen. Portman led a group of 57 Senators in calling on the Administration to protect American steel manufacturers and the jobs they support. Sen. Brown's and Sen. Portman's efforts come in advance of a major trade case before DOC that involves Oil Country Tubular Goods (OCTG). OCTG are used for domestic oil and gas exploration—especially shale—and are produced by Ohio companies U. S. Steel, Vallourec Star, Wheatland Tube, and TMK IPSCO in Brookfield. The Senators urged DOC to closely consider the facts of the case and fully enforce our trade laws to ensure American businesses and workers are not harmed by these imports.

In June, Sen. Brown joined Mahoning Valley workers to call on the Obama Administration to protect Ohio steel manufacturers and the jobs they support. Inside the mill of Wheatland Tube/JMC Steel in Warren, Sen. Brown and local steelworkers urged the DOC to crack down on countries that unfairly dump their steel in the U.S. market, threatening American jobs and competitiveness.

“We write to express our concerns with the Commerce Department’s preliminary determination in the antidumping investigation of Oil Country Tubular Goods (OCTG) imports from Korea,” the lawmakers wrote. “This case has nationwide economic implications, and any final determination must be based on accurate data and objective methodologies. As the Department continues the investigation, we ask that you fully consider the domestic industry’s allegations and take action against any unfair dumping to the fullest extent of the law.”

Protecting Ohio Jobs by Maintaining “Buy America” Provisions

In order for our economy to continue adding jobs, we must ensure American taxpayer dollars are used to support manufacturers and workers at home, not overseas. Sen. Brown urged Senate committee leaders to protect “Buy America” provisions that would support domestic manufacturers. Sen. Brown introduced and helped passed a bipartisan amendment to the Senate version of the *Water Resources Development Act* (WRDA) that would ensure that American-made iron, steel, and manufactured goods are used in federally-funded water infrastructure projects whenever they are available and competitively priced. The law would help Ohio manufacturers like ArcelorMittal in Cleveland, U. S. Steel in Lorain, and Gerdau Long in Orrville.

Rallying for Northeast Ohio Manufacturers

Northeast Ohio’s steelmakers and workers can compete against anyone in the world when given access to a level playing field. But American producers are increasingly losing sales to foreign competitors like Korea because oil country tubular goods imports are being dumped into the U.S. market. Full enforcement of our trade laws is critical for the future of this industry and its workers. Sen. Brown joined northeast Ohio workers at a May rally to call on the Obama Administration to protect Ohio steel manufacturers and the jobs they support. Outside of the U.S. Steel facility in Lorain, Sen. Brown and local steelworkers urged the Commerce Department (DOC) to crack down on countries that unfairly dump their steel in the U.S. market, threatening American jobs and competitiveness.

Trade Adjustment Assistance Available for Loudonville Workers

Ohioans who work hard and play by the rules should not be left to struggle when they lose their job through no fault of their own. Sen. Brown announced that employees of MCI Service Parts, Inc. in Loudonville, including on-site contracted employees from Kelly Services, Inc., are eligible to apply for trade adjustment assistance (TAA) through the U.S. Department of Labor. These resources will help ensure that displaced workers in Loudonville have the financial support and training opportunities needed for a fresh start.

Boosting American Steel Industry and Keeping Ohioans at Work

Manufacturing is a cornerstone of our economy, and it's making a comeback. It is important to keep the momentum going by enforcing trade policies that ensure our workers can compete on a level playing field. Sen. Brown visited Warren Steel Holdings in August to outline efforts to boost domestically-manufactured steel and keep Ohioans at work. Sen. Brown is fighting on behalf of Ohio steel manufacturers to pressure the Obama Administration to implement policies that support the production and procurement of American steel to help business retain and add workers while boosting Ohio communities' economic strength.



Helping Small Businesses Grow and Add Jobs

Creating Domestic Textile Jobs in Cleveland

Cleveland has a rich and proud history in the apparel industry and a workforce that is second-to-none. Sen. Brown joined the CEO of a new clothing company, The Wahconah Group, to announce the opening of the company's new Cleveland headquarters and plans to hire up to 200 new employees. Sen. Brown also discussed the *Wear American Act*, which would create more jobs in the domestic textile industry by ensuring that the U.S. government "Buys American" and stops using taxpayer dollars to purchase products made overseas using child labor. Founded in 2011, The Wahconah Group designs, sources, manufactures, and sells apparel through a multiple lifestyle brand strategy that includes licensed brands, owned brands, tailored clothing with a focus on men's apparel, and private labeling/contract manufacturing.

Pressing for American Made Flags

In September 2014, the Senate passed the *All-American Flag Act* – Sen. Brown's bill to require the federal government to buy American-made flags. The Federal government is currently required to purchase flags made from only 50 percent American-made materials. Sen. Brown's legislation would require the government to buy flags that are produced entirely with American-made materials. The *All-American Flag Act* would directly benefit American workers and businesses, including RS Sewing from Canton, the largest supplier of American-Made Stick Flags in the United States.

"American flags should be American made," Sen. Brown said. "It is the right way to honor our veterans, and it is the right way to support American workers and businesses. With Ohio companies proudly producing the American flag, taxpayer funds should not be used to purchase those made in other countries. I thank committee leadership for supporting my legislation and helping it move one step closer to becoming law."

Promoting Small Business Growth

Small businesses are essential to our economy and local communities and their residents can lead the way in rural economic development. Sen. Brown announced in October that the Village of Middlefield was awarded \$99,000 by the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Rural Business Enterprise Grant Program to promote small business growth through a revolving loan fund. Sen.

Brown is the first Ohioan to serve on the Senate Agriculture Committee in more than 40 years. In 2014, he was part of the Senate Farm Bill Conference Committee that successfully negotiated a five-year Farm Bill that had been stalled for more than three years. Sen. Brown supported a strong Rural Development title in the 2014 Farm Bill to encourage economic development in rural communities.

Helping Small Businesses Succeed

Small businesses in Ohio are hubs for innovation, but they often require help raising the capital needed for research and development. Sen. Brown announced the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA) awarded Larad, Inc. in Wooster \$97,218 as part of its Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) program. NIFA's SBIR program provides small businesses with resources for agricultural research and development. Larad will use this funding to advance innovative technologies that safeguard our food supply and protect farm animals. These federal resources will allow Larad, Inc. to make breakthroughs in agriculture that will serve consumers across the state and nation.

Building Northeast Ohio Infrastructure and Transportation

Protecting the Great Lakes from Invasive Species



We rely on the Great Lakes to create jobs and help raise revenue for our local economies. Sen. Brown announced that Lorain County received \$500,000 from the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) in order to help protect Lake Erie from the threat of invasive species. Specifically, the grant will be used towards controlling invasive plants, like phragmites, and restoring 30 acres of habitat in the Lake Erie watershed. This is excellent news for the Great Lakes region and the Black River watershed. With invasive plants posing a serious threat

to the health of Lake Erie habitat, this grant is a much-needed step towards stopping the spread of plants like phragmites.

Improving Water Infrastructure in Ashtabula County

Ohio's rural communities and small towns face a heavy burden when financing infrastructure projects. Sen. Brown announced that the Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) awarded grant funding to the City of Geneva for the Sanitary Sewer Project. The project will improve sewer service for more than 13 businesses, in addition to creating 44 new jobs and providing \$6.7 million in private investment. This improvement project will provide residents and businesses with a modern water system that improves water quality and encourages investment in the City of Geneva.

Protecting Lake Erie Water Quality

In March, Sen. Brown announced new federal funds to support green infrastructure projects in Cleveland, Lakewood, and Lorain aimed at improving the water quality of Lake Erie. The funds were awarded by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) through the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative (GLRI), an interagency effort to protect the Great Lakes. Cleveland will

use its funding to install infrastructure that reduces the stormwater runoff by absorbing rainfall before it can reach and contaminate water supplies like Lake Erie. Lakewood will reduce its levels of untreated stormwater runoff through the installation of bioretention planters. These planters will also reduce overflows from the city's sewer system to Lake Erie. Lorain plans to use its funding to create a water treatment center to lessen the amount of bacteria that is discharged into Lake Erie. Its efforts will reduce the number of beach closures due to bacteria.

Expanding Sewer System Capacity in Mahoning County

Sen. Brown announced \$125,000 in new federal funds to support the McCartney Road Sanitary Sewer Extension project in Youngstown. The funds were awarded by the Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) in order to improve the sewer service for two local businesses. The Board of Mahoning County Commissioners will construct 2,711 linear feet of eight-inch sewer lines along Route 422 to increase the capacity of the sewer system by 1.26 million gallons a day.

This federal investment in the city's infrastructure will lead to more jobs and more efficient operations for local businesses. Projects like this help boost the economy and make Youngstown a more competitive city.

The project will benefit a local industrial painting company and will allow the Iron and String Life Enhancement, Inc. (ISLE) to expand, creating 15 new jobs and generating \$700,000 in leveraged private investments. ISLE is a disability services organization which provides residential, respite, transportation, advocacy, and vocational services.

Improving Service of Northeast Ohio Electric Cooperative

New federal resources will allow for the construction of improved electric systems in Holmes and Wayne Counties. Sen. Brown announced that Holmes-Wayne Electric Cooperative, Inc. will receive a loan from the United States Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Rural Utilities Service (RUS) – Electric Program. The funds will be used to make system improvements, including upgrading 144 miles of electric line. \$563,000 of the loan is allotted for smart grid projects. Homes-Wayne Electric Cooperative, Inc. provides electricity to over 18,000 business and residences throughout Ashland, Coshocton, Holmes, Knox, Medina, Stark, Tuscarawas, and Wayne Counties. These funds from the Agriculture Department will help ensure reliable electricity for the residents of northeast Ohio.

Encouraging Wind Energy Development on Lake Erie

We must continue to fund clean energy projects that create jobs, strengthen our local economies, and protect the environment now and in the future. Sen. Brown applauded a May announcement by the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) that the Lake Erie Development Corporation (LEEDCo) will receive federal funds for a wind energy project in northeast Ohio. While LEEDCo was not one of the three winners of DOE's Advanced Technology Demonstration Project program, the local nonprofit finished fourth and will receive federal funds to continue its foundation, electrical system, and data collection work. These funds are an important step towards northeast Ohio building the first freshwater, offshore wind development in North America.

Finding Long-Term Solutions to Repair Ohio's Roads and Bridges



Northeast Ohio is home to more than 87 “structurally deficient” bridges. These bridges—located in every county of the state—depend on funding from a federal transportation bill for critical improvements and upgrades. By rebuilding our bridges and roads we strengthen our nation’s economic competitiveness, bolster our local communities, and ensure thousands of hardworking Ohioans remain on the job rebuilding our country.

New Resources to Redevelop Northeast Ohio Brownfield Sites

Ohio’s Brownfield sites can be opportunities for redevelopment and new growth. In May, Sen. Brown announced new federal funds to support environmental Brownfield site assessments in Ashtabula, Lake, Lorain, Summit, and Stark Counties. The funds were awarded to the Ashtabula County Port Authority, the City of Painesville, Lorain County, the Northeast Ohio Four County Regional Planning and Development Organization, and the Stark County Regional Planning Commission by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency’s (EPA) Fiscal Year 2014 Brownfields Assessment, Revolving Loan Fund, and Cleanup (ARC) program. These funds will help support clean-up and decontamination efforts critical to the safety and economic success of northeast Ohio.

Unveiling New Section of Towpath Trail



In July, Sen. Brown joined northeast Ohio leaders in officially unveiling a new section and park of the Ohio & Erie Canal Towpath Trail. The first publicly- funded section of the trail in Cleveland was made possible with federal and state funds from the *American Recovery and Reinvestment Act* (ARRA) and the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative (GLRI). Sen. Brown was joined by, among others,

former Rep. Ralph Regula and Rep. Marcy Kaptur.

“The Ohio & Erie Canal Towpath Trail is significant to the economy of northeast Ohio and the recreation of its citizens. This new park and trail section will improve both,” Sen. Brown said. “It is important that federal, state, and local stakeholders continue to work together to maintain the beauty and integrity of this trail.”

Investing in Infrastructure and Jobs

In July, Sen. Brown attended a Senate Banking Committee hearing to examine ways in which we can improve our economy by developing local communities. The hearing, entitled “Building Economically Resilient Communities: Local and Regional Approaches,” featured expert testimony from Joseph Calabrese, the Chief Executive Officer and General Manager of the Greater Cleveland Regional Transit Authority (RTA). Sen. Brown and Calabrese urged Congress

to support transportation investments, like those being made by RTA, to create jobs, improve citizens' lives, and make the region more competitive.

New Resources for Chippewa Creek

Sen. Brown announced that the United States Department of Agriculture's (USDA) National Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) awarded funding for two watershed rehabilitation projects at Chippewa Creek in Cuyahoga County. Chippewa Creek's dams will be repaired in order to prevent flooding and decreased water quality from watershed run-off.

"Public health and safety is threatened if we don't maintain our dams," Sen. Brown said. "Structural erosion can lead to flooding and, as we have seen the past few years around Ohio, unmanaged run-off can dramatically harm water quality. These new federal resources will help protect Brecksville and other nearby communities from future flooding."

Improving Northeast Ohio Airports

In July, Sen. Brown announced that the Northeast Ohio Regional Airport and Youngstown-Warren Regional Airport were awarded funds by the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) to conduct assessments and improvements.

Renovating Northeast Ohio Sewer Systems

Sen. Brown is working to help communities around Ohio struggling to afford costly but necessary renovations to sewer systems. Sen. Brown recently announced that the United States Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Rural Utilities Service (RUS) awarded \$30,000 to the Village of Rock Creek for wastewater planning. The project, funded through the RUS Water and Environmental Program, will improve wastewater infrastructure – providing access to clean water and creating jobs. This federal investment will lead to more reliable service for residents, more efficient operations for local businesses, and cleaner waterways for Rock Creek.

Protecting the Black River

In October, Sen. Brown announced that the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's Great Lakes Restoration Initiative (GLRI) awarded the City of Lorain \$1,522,644 for two projects to help restore the habitat along the Black River in Lorain. The Black River is an important natural and economic resource for Lorain. Lorain received \$1,347,644 for the Black River Landing and Heron Rookery Restoration Project. Those funds will support stream bank stabilization and in-stream habitat restoration to benefit fish and other species, including heron. According to the State of Ohio, more than \$10 billion of the state's nearly \$40 billion tourism industry is derived from counties along the Lake Erie shoreline. Restoration efforts in the region are essential to maintaining a strong economy along the Ohio coast.

Supporting Servicemembers, Veterans, and Law Enforcement

New Resources for Northeast Ohio Firefighters



Firefighters put their lives on the line each day to keep our communities safe. It is important that Ohio's responders have the staff and equipment necessary to keep residents safe. Sen. Brown was pleased to announce new federal resources awarded to fire departments in northeast Ohio for hiring by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security's (DHS) Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Staffing for Adequate Fire & Emergency Response (SAFER) grant program. The Richmond Heights Fire Department and Cleveland Heights Fire Department in

Cuyahoga County, Village of Lakemore Fire Department in Summit County, and Central Fire District in Wayne County's Smithville were awarded funds to hire firefighters. With so many communities already facing budget shortfalls, critical federal efforts like SAFER are pivotal in keeping our Ohio cities, towns, and villages safe.

The following departments received new federal resources to ensure that northeast Ohio's skilled responders have the updated resources they need to safely do their jobs:

- Summit County: Stow Fire Department, Norton Fire Department, Springfield Township Fire Department, City of Akron Fire Department, New Franklin Fire Department
- Stark County: North Lawrence Volunteer Fire Department, Jackson Township Fire Department, Alliance Fire Department
- Lake County: Grand River Village Fire Department
- Lorain County: Carlisle Township Fire Department, South Amherst Village Fire Department
- Trumbull County: Warren Township Fire Department, Warren Fire Department
- Wayne County: Kidron Volunteer Fire Department, Dalton Volunteer Fire Department
- Ashtabula County: Conneaut Fire Department, Trumbull Township Fire Department
- Portage County: Kent Fire Department, Paris Township Fire Department, Edinburg Fire Department
- Geauga County: Parkman Township Fire Department
- Mahoning County: Green Township Volunteer Fire Department, Lowellville Volunteer Fire Department
- Cuyahoga County: North Olmsted Fire Department, Brooklyn Fire Department, Berea Fire Department

Sen. Brown also announced new federal resources were awarded to the Canaan Township Fire Department in Wayne County; the Perry Township Fire Department in Stark County; the Geneva and Ashtabula Fire Departments in Ashtabula County; the City of Niles, Liberty Township, Champion Township, and Vienna Fire Departments in Trumbull County; the Garrettsville

Freedom Nelson Joint Fire District, the Edinburg Fire Department in Rootstown Township, and the Windham Volunteer Joint Fire District in Portage County; the Northfield Village Fire Department in Summit County; and the Cleveland Heights, Rocky River, Orange Village, Shaker Heights, and Richmond Heights Fire Departments in Cuyahoga County. The U.S. Department of Homeland Security's (DHS) Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) awarded the funds through its Assistance to Firefighters Grant program. These new federal resources will help ensure that northeast Ohio's firefighters have the skilled responders and updated resources they need to safely do their jobs.

Growing Infrastructure and Jobs at Camp Ravenna

Sen. Brown announced that the Camp Ravenna Joint Military Training Center will receive federal funds as part of the bipartisan Senate-House appropriations deal that passed both chambers in January. Sen. Brown helped secure the funds to extend the Ravenna water/sewer line.

"This is excellent news for the Camp Ravenna Joint Military Training Center," Sen. Brown said. "By developing its utility infrastructure, Camp Ravenna can grow and bring more jobs to northeast Ohio."

This infrastructure and utility funding is crucial to the growth of Camp Ravenna, which the Ohio National Guard plans to expand and develop as a major training site.

In January, Sen. Brown announced that the Camp Ravenna Joint Military Training Center is officially one of the only four sites in the country that the Department of Defense (DOD) is considering for a potential missile defense site.

"It is encouraging that Camp Ravenna is currently being considered for future Department of Defense missions," Sen. Brown said. "Designating Camp Ravenna as a missile defense site would create local jobs and strengthen the regional economy."

Northeast Ohio Students Appointed to U.S. Service Academies

In March and April, Sen. Brown announced that three northeast Ohio students were extended Offers of Appointment from U.S. Military Service Academies. The U.S. Merchant Marine Academy extended an Offer of Appointment to Canfield High School student Kaylee Kilbert. The U.S. Military Academy at West Point extended an Offer of Appointment to Howland High School student Madeline Lewis. The U.S. Air Force Academy extended an Offer of Appointment to Newton Falls High School student Haley Spletzer.

Sen. Brown nominated Kilbert, Lewis, and Spletzer for the respective academies. "Ohio schools are educating the young people who will become the next generation of military leaders. I am proud that Kaylee, Madeline, and Haley have been offered the opportunity to attend three of our nation's most prestigious institutions," said Sen. Brown. "Their families and communities should be proud of these dynamic young women, who embody the integrity and courage needed to represent well and uphold the values of our nation."

Each year, Sen. Brown nominates up to 10 students for each slot at our nation's service academies requiring congressional recommendations, including: the Air Force Academy; the Naval Academy; the Military Academy at West Point; and the Merchant Marine Academy. This year, because two openings were available at both the Air Force Academy and the Naval Academy, Sen. Brown nominated 20 students to those institutions. A nomination does not guarantee acceptance into a service academy. The Academy's Admissions Board ultimately decides who receives an appointment.

Honoring Veterans with Overdue Military Honors

One of the most important things we can do is honor brave Ohioans who served honorably and protected our country. As a senior member of the Senate Veterans' Affairs Committee, Sen. Brown is happy to help veterans and families of deceased veterans secure overdue or replacement military medals.



Sen. Brown helped to secure the Bronze Star and several other military honors for Staff Sergeant Christopher Barna, an Iraq and Afghanistan veteran who was raised in Novelty and now lives in Akron. Barna was presented the medals by his grandfather, Nick Arno, a World War II Marine Veteran and Purple Heart recipient. Barna joined the Army Reserves in 2007 and was trained as a psychological operations specialist. He served a tour in Iraq in 2008 and in Afghanistan in 2012. He was honorably discharged in January 2013 with the rank of Staff Sergeant.

In April, Sen. Brown honored Mahoning Valley veteran, Robert Towles, with the Distinguished Service Cross—the U.S. Army's second highest military honor. Sen. Brown worked with Rep. Tim Ryan to recognize Mr. Towles for his heroism during the Vietnam War. In May, Sen. Brown's staff presented honors to Vietnam Veterans Michael Erro of Cleveland and Felix Alberto Bermudez-Gonzalez of Lorain. Matthew Heba of Cleveland was also honored for his service in the Navy during World War II.

On Flag Day, Sen. Brown awarded 20 northeast Ohio veterans and the local families of deceased veterans with more than 140 military honors they earned in service to our country. Sen. Brown and his staff worked with the National Personnel Records Center and the U.S. Armed Forces to track down missing, lost, or overdue medals.

The medal ceremony on the field of Canal Park immediately preceded the start of the Akron RubberDucks game. Joining Sen. Brown to honor the local veterans was Tom Burke, the National Chair of Public Affairs for Vietnam Veterans of America; Mike Stith, a Summit County Veterans Service Commissioner; and Cari Delgado, a Trumbull County Veterans Service Commissioner.

In September, Sen. Brown presented 10 military service medals – including the Bronze Star – to Thomas Ducharme, a Vietnam veteran from Warren. Ducharme enlisted in the Army in 1965 and served as an aviation specialist, drill sergeant, and recruiter until 1973. Sen. Brown also presented the Bronze Star to Trumbull County Veterans Service Office Commissioner Gary

Gutelius. Gutelius received the award last year, but it was not presented to him. He has also received the Purple Heart.

Ohio veterans and the family members of deceased veterans may request military records and medals by contacting Sen. Brown's Cleveland office at (216) 522-7272, or by visiting the "Constituent Services" section of Sen. Brown's website at brown.senate.gov.

Protecting Ohio Jobs and Keeping Airline Passengers Safe

Sen. Brown urged the Transportation Security Administration (TSA) to protect the jobs and safety of Ohioans by keeping its field offices in Cleveland and Cincinnati open. In February, the Federal Air Marshal Service announced its plans to realign offices and workforce across the country, including the expected closure of Cleveland and Cincinnati field offices by June 2016. The TSA should work to save local jobs by keeping its offices in Cleveland and Cincinnati open. Ohioans have dedicated years of hard work and quality service to the Federal Air Marshal Service. They and their families have earned the right not to be uprooted. Closing these important offices could put the safety of Ohioans at risk.

Honoring a Summit County Fallen Hero

Sen. Brown introduced legislation in May 2014 that would rename the Tallmadge Branch Post Office in Summit County as the "Lance Corporal Daniel Nathan Deyarmin Jr. Post Office Building" to honor Tallmadge native Daniel Nathan Deyarmin Jr. who died on August 1, 2005 while serving as a Marine in Iraq. Rep. Tim Ryan introduced the House companion to the bill. The bills passed and were signed into law on July 25, 2015 to honor Daniel Nathan Deyarmin Jr.

"Lance Corporal Daniel Nathan Deyarmin Jr. was a dedicated and committed member of our nation's Armed Forces and the selfless sacrifice that he and his family made for our country will not be forgotten," Sen. Brown said. "By renaming the Tallmadge Branch Post Office after him, we can help ensure that we honor his legacy."

Alerting Active Servicemembers to Free Museum Opportunities in Northeast Ohio

In May, Sen. Brown announced that Oberlin Heritage Center and the Edison Birthplace Museum in Milan will offer active duty, National Guard, and Reserve military servicemembers and their families free entrance from Memorial Day through Labor Day, as part of the Blue Star Museums program. The program offers military personnel and their families free entrance into art centers, museums, and exhibits across the country in order to thank them for their service. Blue Star Museums is a partnership between the National Endowment for the Arts, Blue Star Families, Joining Forces, MetLife Foundation, and the participating museums.

Oberlin Heritage Center provides the community with exhibits highlighting the city of Oberlin's history. Edison Birthplace Museum is located in the home in which Thomas Edison was born. It provides the community with exhibits highlighting his life and inventions.

"I applaud Oberlin Heritage Center and Edison Birthplace Museum for participating in Blue Star Museums" Sen. Brown said. "Our nation's military servicemembers and their families sacrifice so much, and we should all give back in any way possible."

Making Ohio Veterans' Needs Heard in Washington

Ohio's veterans served their country with selflessness and courage. For their sacrifice abroad, they deserve our support while home. In May, Sen. Brown invited Larry Moore, the Legislative Chairman of the Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) Department of Ohio as his guest to the Senate Democratic Steering and Outreach Committee. During the hearing, Moore, an Akron resident and Mansfield native, testified on the need to ensure Ohio's veterans receive the resources they need and earned after serving their country.

Assisting Veterans with War-Related Injuries



When veterans seek claims for war-related injuries like post-traumatic stress (PTS) and traumatic brain injury (TBI), the burden for establishing the connection should be on the Department of Defense, not on the veteran. With nearly 300,000 American veterans struggling with Post-Traumatic Stress (PTS) and another 25,000 veterans facing mild Traumatic Brain Injuries (mTBI), Sen. Brown, a senior member of the Senate Veterans' Affairs Committee, was in Cleveland and Struthers to outline a new plan to help active duty servicemembers better track potential exposures during deployment that could be later connected to mental health injuries and mild TBI during deployments. Without proper documentation or a visible,

physical injury, it is often difficult for veterans to establish a connection between injuries and military service. This lack of documentation can lead to improper medical care and increases in the disability claims backlog.

Currently, veterans who file compensation and disability claims, or seek medical care, must provide the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) with evidence that connects their claim to previous military service. In cases and conditions such as PTS and mild TBI, veterans must provide either a written testimony from other servicemembers who witnessed the accident, provide relevant medical documentation that supports the claim, or possess military orders that prove the veteran was in a unit or location that supports the claim. These types of documentation however provide only a secondary account of the claim and may not fully illustrate the veteran's claim of service connected PTS and mild TBI.

Providing Fathers of Fallen or Disabled Servicemembers with Federal Hiring Preferences

The loss of a loved one is never easy, but when a servicemember is killed in action or permanently and totally disabled, the government should do its part to be there for the grieving parents—no matter if they are fathers or mothers. Sen. Brown visited Cleveland to urge Congress to pass his legislation that would recognize a father's sacrifice when his child is killed in action or permanently and totally disabled. Inspired by a conversation with a Canton father who lost his son in Iraq, the *Gold Star Fathers Act of 2014* would extend hiring preferences currently available only to Gold Star mothers and spouses. By extending federal preference eligibility to Gold Star fathers, we are righting a wrong that should have been corrected many years ago.

Standing Up for Ohio Veterans

Veterans who serve their country in order to protect our freedoms should never face homelessness. Sen. Brown – a member of the Senate Veterans’ Affairs Committee – visited the VA Domiciliary in Cleveland to outline a plan to further support the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) goal of eliminating veteran homelessness by 2015. Sen. Brown toured the facility and met with veterans who are utilizing services at the VA Domiciliary to get back on their feet. Sen. Brown outlined how *the Homeless Veterans Prevention Act* would improve homelessness prevention programs by developing public-private partnerships focused on increasing the availability of legal services to homeless veterans; expanding transitional housing opportunities to include increased resources and eligibility for female veterans and veterans with dependents; and increasing existing programs.



Sen. Brown also announced federal funding to provide rental assistance and clinical services for homeless veterans in northeast Ohio as part of the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development-Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing (HUD-VASH) voucher program. This funding will provide rental for homeless veterans, while partnering them with a local Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) medical center.

“Veterans who serve their country in order to protect our freedoms should never face homelessness,” Sen. Brown said. “This rental assistance for homeless veterans is an important step in honoring the promise to support those who have already given so much to our nation.”

As the only Ohio Senator to serve a full term on the Senate Veterans’ Affairs Committee, Sen. Brown continues to work to address issues facing Ohio veterans.

Honoring Ohio’s Heroes

Ohio’s veterans made invaluable contributions to our fight for worldwide peace and democracy. Ohio’s current and former servicemembers have answered the call to action without delay throughout our nation’s history. As a member of the Senate Committee on Veterans’ Affairs, one of the most rewarding aspects of Sen. Brown’s job is fighting for Ohio’s veterans by ensuring that they receive the benefits they so richly deserve.

In a ceremony on the weekend before Veterans Day, a representative from the office of Sen. Brown joined a U.S. Navy Reserve Officer to present seven military service medals – including the Silver Star and the Purple Heart – to David Chenoweth, a World War II veteran who lives in Warren. The surprise ceremony took place during a lunch planned by his family to mark Chenoweth’s 93rd birthday. He served in the Asiatic Pacific Theater and was injured during the Battle of Iwo Jima on February 23, 1945 before retiring from the United States Navy Reserve with the rank of Lieutenant Commander in August 1959.

In a ceremony at Gray's Armory on the day before Veterans Day, Sen. Brown presented six military medals – including the Purple Heart – to the family of Larry Eisenbraun, a Vietnam veteran who was killed in action in 1968. After graduating from high school in Boardman, Eisenbraun enlisted in the Navy and served as a Hospital Corpsman with the Marine Corps' 3rd Reconnaissance Battalion, Echo Company.

In a ceremony at First Presbyterian Church in Warren on the day after Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day, the family of Lucian 'Sam' Biviano – a World War II veteran who survived the December 7, 1941 attack on Pearl Harbor while he was serving aboard the USS Oklahoma – received six military awards that U.S. Sen. Sherrod Sen. Brown helped secure. A representative from Sen. Brown's office was in attendance.

Supporting Ohio's Military Reserve

The men and women of the Youngstown Air Reserve Station (YARS) play an important role in emergency response actions, search and rescue operations, and defense missions. Sen. Brown recently toured YARS and discussed his bill to modernize Ohio's Air Force Reserve and Air National Guard C-130H fleet without a costly overhaul. To continue operating, the fleet must be upgraded by 2020 to meet federal and international standards. The C-130H fleet is the U.S. military's primary combat delivery aircraft, and has provided humanitarian assistance, precision airdrop, and tactical airlift missions across the globe for more than four decades. Sen. Brown's bill would allow the Air Force to use a less expensive communication and navigation overhaul without sacrificing safety and effectiveness.



An amendment cosponsored Sen. Brown to speed modernization of Ohio's C-130 fleet was included as a provision in the House-Senate conference report for the *National Defense Authorization Act* (NDAA). The provision would support jobs at the Youngstown Air Reserve Station (YARS) and Mansfield Lahm Air National Guard Base (ANGB) by allowing the C-130 fleet to make upgrades to meet federal and international standards.

Protecting and Supporting Northeast Ohio Consumers

Expediting Approval Process for Safer Sunscreen Ingredients

There are more than two million cases of skin cancer in the United States each year and 90 percent are the result of harmful sun exposure. While consumers use sunscreen to protect themselves from harmful exposure to the sun, Americans do not have access to the most advanced sunscreen that Canadians and those in the European Union (EU) do.

In Cleveland, Sen. Brown announced his support for bipartisan legislation that would protect Ohioans from the effects of harmful exposure to the sun, including skin cancer. Sen. Brown is a cosponsor of a bipartisan bill that would strengthen the potency of U.S. sunscreen at no cost to taxpayers by expediting the bureaucratic review process of stronger sun protection products already available to consumers in Canada and the EU, but not the United States. The Food and

Drug Administration's (FDA) review backlog of more than a decade is unacceptable and puts lives at risk.

Fighting to Ban Powdered Caffeine

Following the death of a Lorain County high school student, Sen. Brown called on the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) to ban the sale of powdered caffeine. During a visit to the Cleveland YMCA, Sen. Brown was joined by the parents of Logan Stiner, a senior at Keystone High School in LaGrange, who died just three days before his high school graduation because of ingesting too much powdered caffeine.



Sen. Brown also met with the Stiners in Washington, D.C. to increase pressure on the FDA to ban the sale of powdered caffeine. The Stiner family joined the parents of Wade Sweatt – a 24-year-old Georgia resident who also died after ingesting caffeine powder – and advocates from the Center for Science in the Public Interest (CSPI) to deliver a citizen petition urging the FDA to ban the sale of powdered caffeine.

Although the FDA alerted consumers to the dangers of powdered caffeine on its website following Stiner's death, these products remain on the shelves and are available online without any sort of regulation, warnings, or protections.

Supporting Social Security, Medicare, and Healthcare

Protecting Northeast Seniors from Unfair Medicare Costs



When seniors are transferred from a hospital to a nursing home for further care, they should be able to focus on their recovery instead of technicalities that could lead to sky-high medical bills. Sen. Brown visited MetroHealth Medical Center in Cleveland and St. Elizabeth Health Center in Youngstown to announce a plan that would end an arbitrary Medicare policy that causes seniors to be unknowingly hit with large, unfair costs after receiving necessary post-acute medical care. Under current Medicare policy, a beneficiary must have

an "inpatient" hospital stay of at least three days in order for Medicare to cover post-hospitalization skilled nursing care. Patients that receive hospital care on "observation status" do not qualify for this benefit, even if their hospital stay lasts longer than three days. Sen. Brown's *Improving Access to Medicare Coverage Act* would fix current law to count a beneficiary's time spent in the hospital on "observation status" towards the three-day hospital stay requirement for skilled nursing care. This would help ensure that seniors receive the care they need without incurring unexpected and unfair costs.

Investing in Smoking Cessation Efforts

CVS's announcement that it will become the first national pharmacy to stop selling cigarettes and will instead invest in smoking cessation efforts is excellent news for the health of Americans

across the country. The announcement came on the heels of a resolution Sen. Brown introduced recognizing the 50th anniversary of the first Surgeon General report linking smoking tobacco with lung cancer and heart disease. With tobacco use still the leading cause of preventable and premature disease, disability, and death in the United States, Sen. Brown joined CVS MinuteClinic Chief Medical Officer Dr. Nancy Gagliano in calling for other companies to follow CVS's example and take similar efforts that would help save lives.

“While we’ve made progress in the last half century, tobacco use is still the leading cause of preventable death in the world. Here is a tangible corporate decision that can significantly slow the insidious creep of addiction, lung cancer, coronary disease, and respiratory harm caused by tobacco and nicotine. In order to continue this progress and save lives, other pharmacy retailers need to take responsibility for the health of their customers and stop the sale of tobacco products,” Sen. Brown said.

Meeting with Mercy Medical Center Representatives



In March, Sen. Brown met with two Canton residents who were representing Mercy Medical Center of Stark County in Washington, D.C. At his weekly coffee with constituents, Sen. Brown met with Thomas E. Cecconi and Tom Turner of Canton. “It was an honor to meet with Mr. Cecconi and Mr. Turner of Canton’s Mercy Medical Center in Washington,” Sen. Brown said. “Both Thomas and Tom deserve enormous praise for their work in bettering Canton and Ohio’s future.”

Alerting Northeast Ohioans of Local Resources Available to Help Enroll in the New Health Insurance Marketplace

Sen. Brown participated in the “Countdown to Get Covered” bus tour for a stop at the Cuyahoga Community College Metro Campus in Cleveland and Eastern Gateway Community College in Youngstown ahead of the end of the health laws open enrollment period. Sen. Brown called attention to local resources available for northeast Ohio residents planning to purchase health insurance through the new health insurance marketplace. At the event, local navigators took appointments and walk-in meetings to help local citizens enroll in an affordable, high-quality health plan.

Encouraging Children’s Physical Education and Nutrition Programs

Teaching students the importance of physical activity and a balanced diet is critical in aiding their development. Healthy students perform better in the classroom and these programs will give students the skills they need to make healthy choices well into adulthood. Sen. Brown was pleased to announce new federal funds to support physical education and nutrition programs in Lake County aimed at introducing healthy, lifelong habits. Lake County General Health District, the recipient of the grant, will oversee the implementation of these programs at schools across the county.

Protecting Northeast Ohioans from “Super Bugs”

Each year more than 23,000 Americans die from bacterial infections that are resistant to antibiotics. Antibiotics and other antimicrobial drugs have been a victim of their own success. We have used these drugs so widely and for so long that the microbes they are designed to kill have adapted to them, making the drugs less effective. With so-called “super bugs” on the rise, Sen. Brown announced a plan to combat antimicrobial resistance and called for greater federal attention to the increase in antibiotic-resistant infections that affect more than two million Americans each year. Emerging antimicrobial resistance and the growing shortage of effective antibiotic drugs is widely regarded as a crisis that jeopardizes patient safety and public health. Sen. Brown’s legislation, the *Strategies to Address Antimicrobial Resistance (STAAR) Act*, would help strengthen the federal response to antimicrobial resistance by placing more of an emphasis on federal antimicrobial resistance surveillance, prevention and control, and research efforts.

New Federal Funds for Community Health Center Development in Northeast Ohio

In April, Sen. Brown announced that Care Alliance Health Center, a medical center serving homeless individuals, people living in or near public housing, and people living with HIV/AIDS in Cleveland, and Lorain County Health & Dentistry, a healthcare organization dedicated to providing care to the underserved, received new resources from the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) to support and develop primary care health services.

“Community health centers play a vital role in helping Ohioans obtain access to primary and preventive health care services,” said Sen. Brown. “These new federal resources will help Care Alliance Health Center and Lorain County Health & Dentistry provide affordable and accessible health care to more of northeast Ohio’s children, seniors, and parents.”

Protecting Seniors from Unfair Preventive Screening Costs

Colorectal cancer is the third-leading cause of cancer death in the country, but too many seniors who go in expecting a free, preventive screening wake up to an unexpected and significant bill. Sen. Brown visited the Cleveland Clinic to announce legislation that would ensure seniors who receive potentially lifesaving colon cancer preventive screenings and procedures are not hit with unfair and burdensome costs. Under current law, seniors covered by Medicare are eligible for free colorectal cancer screenings. However, if a doctor needs to take a further lifesaving, preventive action—like removing a polyp—while the patient is under anesthesia, the patient is billed as if the procedure was treatment rather than prevention. This billing issue not only hurts the pocketbooks of seniors trying to protect themselves from cancer, it also deters other seniors from seeking this preventive care. We must do everything we can to make potentially lifesaving procedures as easy and affordable as possible. Sen. Brown’s legislation would eliminate billing problems so that seniors can stay healthy and protected without taking a hit to their pocketbooks.

Protecting Children from Accidental Poisonings

With a 300 percent increase in accidental poisonings due to liquid nicotine in 2013 alone, Sen. Brown was in Cleveland to announce a plan to protect children from accidental poisonings and death from liquid nicotine. Marketed with flavors appealing to children like “Cotton Candy,” “Fruity Loops,” and “Gummi Bear,” small containers of liquid nicotine—used for electronic cigarettes—contain enough nicotine to kill four small children. While children are protected

from bleach, aspirin, and mouthwash with child-proof packaging, current liquid nicotine packages are not required to be child resistant.

At an emergency room of University Hospitals (UH) Case Medical Center, Sen. Brown announced the *Child Nicotine Poisoning Prevention Act*. Sen. Brown's bipartisan legislation would give the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) the authority and direction to improve liquid nicotine packaging in ways that would prevent accidental poisoning of children.

Preparing for the Ebola Threat

Ohio is home to some of the best hospitals and infectious disease experts in the country. But it's critical that federal officials outline strict and effective protocols to harness that expertise and ensure the safety and health of Ohioans. Less than one week after a health care worker who traveled to northeast Ohio tested positive for Ebola, Sen. Brown sent a letter to Administration officials calling on them to take a more active role in helping state and local officials prepare for any potential Ebola threat in Ohio. In the letter, Sen. Brown outlined a five-part plan for managing any emerging cases of Ebola that included meeting and working directly with state and local public health experts and partnering with local health care systems and hospitals

Supporting Mental Health and Substance Abuse Treatment Services

Health centers play a vital role in helping Ohioans obtain access to primary and preventive health care services. Sen. Brown announced that the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) has awarded \$750,000 in funding through the health law to three northeast Ohio health centers to help support and expand their mental health and substance abuse treatment services. This funding will enable the health centers to hire additional mental health professionals, to better integrate mental health and substance abuse care programs into primary care models, and to increase the number of services available to patients. Ohio received \$1,750,000 total to expand services at seven of its health centers.

Expediting Ebola Test Technology

Following a request from Sens. Brown and Rob Portman, the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) expedited approval of on-site rapid Ebola test technology for use in northeast Ohio hospitals. The U.S. Department of Defense (DOD) is utilizing a "rapid diagnostic" test in West Africa, but the technology had not yet been approved for commercial use by the FDA. In a letter to FDA Commissioner Margaret Hamburg, Sens. Brown and Portman asked that the FDA quickly and carefully review such technologies and allow for their use in communities potentially exposed to the virus. After receiving the letter, the FDA applied its emergency use authorization power to certify two such tests for emergency commercial use.

Advocating for Minority Communities

Remembering Cleveland's Arnold Pinkney

On January 13th, 2014, the Cleveland community lost a longtime public servant and community leader with the passing of Arnold Pinkney. Following his passing, Sen. Brown issued the following statement:

“Arnold Pinkney leaves behind a legacy of public service and dedication to others that should serve as a testament to the way he lived his life. Pinkney’s role in leading Jesse Jackson’s 1984 Presidential bid, and managing Lou Stokes’ Congressional campaign and Carl Stokes’ mayoral campaign changed northeast Ohio and this country. He helped to reshape our political landscape and united people from all walks of life. Jesse Jackson once called him ‘one of our untapped national treasures,’ and I could not agree more. Through his service on the school board, Pinkney was also instrumental in his work rebuilding Cleveland’s schools. And he provided wise counsel to me and so many other leaders across our state. Connie and I offer our prayers and thoughts to his family and rest assured knowing that his legacy lives on.”

Fostering Economic Inclusion



Investments in advanced manufacturing are critical to ensuring that Ohio businesses can compete on a global scale. Sen. Brown announced \$100,000 in federal funds awarded by the U.S. Department of Commerce’s Minority Business Development Agency to the Commission on Economic Inclusion. The funds will be used to help Cleveland’s minority business community develop and implement advanced manufacturing initiatives. Sen. Brown introduced a package of key legislative proposals aimed at bolstering the competitiveness of U.S. manufacturers and boosting domestic manufacturing. The *Revitalize American Manufacturing and Innovation Act* – which President Obama signed into law – will establish a National Network of Manufacturing Innovation and create thousands of high-paying, high-tech manufacturing jobs while enhancing the United States’ role as the world’s leader in advanced manufacturing.

Strengthening Northeast Ohio Neighborhoods: Keeping Ohio Families in Their Homes

Cracking Down on Criminals Who Cost Businesses and Homeowners

No state in the country suffers more from metal theft than Ohio. With the price of metal on the rise, and metal theft growing, action is needed to crack down on metal thieves who cost our businesses and homeowners nearly \$1 billion a year. Sen. Brown was in Cleveland to announce his support for bipartisan legislation that would crack down on criminals who steal metal from critical infrastructure. According to the National Insurance Crime Bureau (NICB), the price of metal is rising, and as a result, metal theft has jumped more than 80 percent at the cost of nearly \$1 billion a year to American industries. The *Metal Theft Prevention Act* would protect Americans by making it easier to catch criminals who steal metal, and make it more difficult for criminals to sell stolen metal.

Supporting Community Development in Summit County

Ohio is on the frontline of the foreclosure crisis. Foreclosures hurt the credit of American families, depress local property values, and weaken communities. Sen. Brown was pleased to announce a new neighborhood development grant for East Akron Neighborhood Development Corporation in Summit County. Awarded by NeighborWorks® America, the grant will be used to promote and preserve affordable housing for residents of Summit County, and create or sustain jobs through local Neighbor Works-supported projects. East Akron Neighborhood

Development Corporation, Inc. is one of eight recipients of the new neighborhood development grants across Ohio.

Protecting Ohio Homeowners

With housing markets beginning to recover, we must continue to provide the resources necessary to protect homeownership and strengthen Ohio communities. Before the end of 2013, Senate Republicans refused to take up and pass legislation that would have relieved, for one year, the requirement for homeowners to pay taxes on mortgage debt forgiveness resulting from mortgage modifications, or short sales.



Sen. Brown was in Cleveland and Youngstown in early 2014 to call for immediate Congressional action to reverse the tax increase imposed on struggling homeowners that began on January 1. Unless Sen. Brown's plan is passed, principal reductions that homeowners receive on their loans through mortgage modifications or short sales would be treated as income by the Internal Revenue Service—sticking already struggling homeowners with tax bills that they may be unable to afford.

Protecting Renters from Unfair Eviction

Tenants who work hard and responsibly pay their rent each month deserve protections for themselves and their families. Sen. Brown was in Cleveland in March to call for immediate Congressional action to renew an expiring law that protects renters from being suddenly and unfairly evicted from their homes. During the housing crisis, too many tenants were forced to move with only a few days' notice when landlords lost their properties to foreclosure. To protect families from these sudden, destabilizing evictions, Congress passed legislation in 2009 which ensures that most tenants can stay in their homes for the remainder of their lease, or for at least 90 days following a foreclosure. But with the law set to expire at the end of the year, Sen. Brown urged Congress to pass new legislation that would both extend and strengthen these renter protections. The *Permanently Protecting Tenants at Foreclosure Act* would renew and strengthen renters' rights so families aren't unfairly evicted from their homes.

Promoting Affordable Housing

It can often be difficult for rural communities to fully fund critical housing or infrastructure projects. Sen. Brown announced that Stone Ridge Village, LLC in Stark County will receive a \$660,000 loan from the United States Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Rural Development branch's Rural Rental Housing Guaranteed Loan program. The total cost of the project is expected to be \$8,028,768, and will build 40 units of affordable rental housing for residents making less than 50 or 60 percent of the area's median income. These funds from the Agriculture Department will help Stark County ensure affordable housing options for its residents.

Supporting Northeast Ohio's Agricultural and Rural Economy

Protecting American Dairy and Cheese Producers

Ohio dairy producers make some of the highest quality cheese in the world. Their product is as good as any from Europe and should be given equal opportunity to compete in the food market. With Ohio ranking 10th in overall domestic cheese production, Sen. Brown and Sen. Portman are working to protect Ohio dairy farmers and producers from a European initiative that would change common names for cheeses frequently purchased by American consumers. Their efforts would protect producers like Hiram's Great Lakes Cheese Co., Inc. which produces and distributes Gorgonzola cheese. In a bipartisan letter signed by more than 50 of their Senate colleagues, Sen. Brown and Portman urged the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) and the United States Trade Representative (USTR) to fight European Union (EU) efforts to prohibit American dairy producers from using dozens of common cheese names. The EU claims that dairy products bearing names such as asiago, feta, parmesan, and Muenster are "geographical indicators" and can only be appropriately displayed on products made in certain areas of Europe.

Increasing Housing Access for Rural Residents

It can often be difficult for rural communities to fully fund critical housing or infrastructure projects. The 2014 Farm Bill made important changes in the way U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) determines eligibility for rural housing programs. Sen. Brown, a senior member of the Senate Agriculture Committee, announced new federal housing resources available to residents in Ashtabula County as part of the 2014 Farm Bill implementation. Changes to the "rural area definition" used by the USDA will expand eligibility for rural housing programs. With this new change definition change, more residents in Ashtabula County will now have access to affordable homeownership programs through the USDA.

Announcing a New Hotel in Stark County

In May, Sen. Brown was pleased to announce that Rama Tika Developers, LLC will receive a \$4,040,000 loan from the United States Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Rural Development branch's Business and Industry Guaranteed Loan program. Rama Tika Developers, LLC will use the funds to finance the construction of a Hampton Inn and Suites Hotel in Alliance. This project is expected to create 25 new jobs.

"Increased business development is great news for Alliance," Sen. Brown said. "This small business investment will help support jobs and boost the local economy."

Safeguarding Ohio's Food Supply

In October, Sen. Brown – a senior member of the Senate Agriculture Committee – announced the U.S. Department of Agriculture's National Institute of Food and Agriculture has awarded Larad, Inc. in Wooster \$97,218 as part of its Small Business Innovation Research program. Larad will use this funding to advance innovative technologies that safeguard our food supply and protect farm animals. Small businesses in Ohio are hubs for innovation, but they often require help raising the capital needed for research and development. These federal resources will allow Larad, Inc. to make breakthroughs in agriculture that will serve consumers across the state and nation.

Fostering Strong Rural Cooperatives

Cooperatives bring communities together – members leverage their shared resources to provide essential goods and services. Sen. Brown announced that the U.S. Department of Agriculture has awarded \$71,988 to Kent State University through its Rural Cooperative Development Grant program. The funding will be used to train economic and cooperative development specialists, support new food cooperatives through technical assistance, and report progress at two national conferences. KSU will also provide long-term planning resources to ensure cooperatives' continued effectiveness during leadership transitions.

New Federal Funds Announced for Rural Economic Development

Youngstown is a leader in local food enterprises, and its example will guide producers nationwide in expanding markets, creating jobs, and strengthening the economy. A representative from the office of Sen. Brown attended the national announcement of a Local Foods, Local Places grant award in Youngstown. The grant program promotes access to healthy local food, provides economic opportunity for local farmers, and supports community revitalization through the development of farmers markets, community gardens, and other local food initiatives in easily accessible locations. The program is funded by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT), the Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC), and the Delta Regional Authority (DRA).

Assisting Vine Growers, Wine Producers, and Aiding Northeast Ohio's Tourism Industry

In the wake of a harsh winter, Ohio's wine and grape industry was reeling from widespread crop losses. The \$780 million a year industry supports thousands of jobs in northeast Ohio and brings in more than a million tourists annually. However, through Sen. Brown's work in the 2014 Farm Bill, grape growers and wine producers were able to recoup some of their losses through the Tree Assistance Program (TAP) along with an improved Non-Insured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP). Sen. Brown, along with his staff, worked with the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) and the Small Business Administration (SBA) to make resources available for producers in Ashtabula, Cuyahoga, Geauga, Lake, Lorain, Portage, Summit, and Trumbull Counties. In September, Sen. Brown met with grape growers and wine producers to see the damage to vines in person, to hear from industry directly, and to discuss the resources made available through the 2014 Farm Bill.

Other Northeastern Regional Highlights

Recognizing Ohio Athletes Competing in the Winter Olympics

Every four years, the world showcases its athletes who exemplify the Olympic ideal. In advance of the opening ceremonies for the Winter Olympics in Sochi, Russia, Sen. Brown honored three Ohioans who competed for Team USA. He acknowledged the skill and character of U.S. speedskater Kelly Gunther from Lorain, and U.S. women's ice hockey players Brianne McLaughlin-Bittle from Sheffield Village and Kelli Stack from Brooklyn Heights.

Kelly, Brianne, and Kelli represented the United States because they proved themselves to be exceptional athletes with the will and determination to compete on sport's highest stage. Ohioans

are proud of their accomplishments and know that they excelled on the rink and as ambassadors of our state and nation.

New Federal Funds for Head Start Programs

In April, Sen. Brown announced new federal funds to support Head Start programs run by Lake-Geauga United Head Start, which has centers in Huntsburg and Willowick, and Portage Learning Centers, an agency in Portage County that provides early intervention and preschool programs for children and families.

In July, Sen. Brown announced new federal funds to support Head Start and Early Head Start programs run by North Central State College in Mansfield.

Sen. Brown also announced \$6,410,705 in new federal funds to support Head Start programs run by Akron Summit Community Action, Inc., an agency dedicated to reducing poverty in Akron and the surrounding area.

“This is excellent news for northeast Ohio families and their children,” Sen. Brown said. “Head Start ensures that children have the skills they need to succeed in elementary school and beyond.”

The funds were awarded by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS). Head Start is a federal program that provides children, until the age of five, from low-income families with programming to prepare them for school. These programs -- including health, nutrition, and social services -- are designed to ensure their healthy cognitive, social, and emotional development.

Federal Funds for Service Programs in Cleveland

AmeriCorps service members volunteer to help their neighbors, support local military families, and educate communities. Their critical work helps build stronger communities and uplift our fellow Ohioans. Sen. Brown announced that federal funds were awarded to Ohio College Guides by the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS) to support AmeriCorps service programs. This funding will allow for 70 more AmeriCorps volunteers to serve in Cleveland. Ohio College Guides is a branch of College Now Greater Cleveland, an organization dedicated to helping students prepare for and graduate from college through guidance and access to funds. City Year Cleveland also received funding from the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS) to support AmeriCorps service programs. This funding will allow for 50 more AmeriCorps volunteers to serve in Cleveland. City Year Cleveland is a branch of City Year, Inc., an organization dedicated to providing students at risk of dropping out with academic, emotional, and social support.

Federal Resources for Museum in Stark County

Sen. Brown was pleased to announce that Massillon Museum will receive federal funding to host a series of programs on the book *Old School* by Tobias Wolff as part of The Big Read’s 2015 program. The Big Read, a partnership between the National Endowment for the Arts and Arts Midwest, aims to make reading more central in American’s lives by creating opportunities for communities to engage with new books.

Welcoming Ohioans to Washington D.C.

In May, Sen. Brown met with Drs. Linda Robertson, Marty Jenicus, and Linda McDonald; representatives of Kent State University's Gerald H. Read Center for International and Intercultural Education. The group attended his weekly coffee with constituents during its trip to Washington, D.C. to see off this year's graduates of the International Leaders in Education Program (ILEP).

ILEP is a federally funded, U.S. Department of State program that brings secondary school teachers from other nations to the United States for a five month academic program at an American university. Participants have the opportunity to further develop their teaching skills, subject area expertise, and knowledge about the United States.



“It was an honor to meet with Drs. McDonald, Jenicus, and Robertson,” Sen. Brown said. “Their work helps bridge the gap between the United States and other nations, giving both international and American students a chance to explore new cultures through education.”

In June, Sen. Brown welcomed representatives with the Legal Aid Society of Cleveland, a non-profit organization that provides free legal services to low-income clients in Ashtabula, Cuyahoga, Geauga, Lake, and Lorain Counties. Sen. Brown also met with a Future Farmers of America (FFA) student group from Smithville during their trip to Washington D.C.

In July, Sen. Brown met with Catherine Rogers, a Chagrin Falls native and rising senior at The Ohio State University (OSU). Rogers is an OSU John Glenn Fellow and was interning in Washington, D.C. for The Ohio State University's Office of Federal Relations. Sen. Brown met with Rogers at his weekly coffee with constituents in Washington. Dr. Robert Juhasz, the President-Elect for the American Osteopathic Association, a professional organization for doctors of osteopathic medicine, and Patti-Jo Burtnett of Elyria, a representative of Lorain County Children Services, also met with Sen. Brown. Sen. Brown welcomed Thomas Imhoff of Twinsburg, Autumn Jocas of North Canton, and Gray Miller of Canton, representatives of The American Legion's Boys Nation/Boys State and The American Legion Auxiliary's Girls Nation/Girls State, and Terry Boden, Luis Cartagena, and Raland Hatchett, representatives of the Minority Business Development Agency (MBDA) Business Center in Cleveland.

In November, Sen. Brown met with Michelle Wilson and Shannon Anicas, representatives of Global Ties Akron, a global education initiative that partners with the U.S. Department of State to coordinate international exchange programs through the department's International Visitor Leadership Program. Wilson serves as Global Ties Akron's Executive Director and Anicas serves as Program Director. The two attended his weekly coffee with constituents during their trip to Washington, D.C. to advocate for international exchange and global education programs.

In 2014, Sen. Brown also welcomed Ohio students who interned in his Capitol Hill office. Students from Cleveland, Wooster, Chardon, and Middlefield served as legislative interns

working alongside staff members to address constituent request and concerns. In Washington, D.C. a typical day could include speaking with constituents on the phone, greeting visitors to the office, organizing incoming correspondence, attending Senate committee hearings and briefings, and leading tours of the U.S. Capitol Building.

Honoring Newly Naturalized U.S. Citizens in the Mahoning Valley

A representative from Sen. Brown's office attended a naturalization ceremony and recognized six Mahoning Valley residents who will become U.S. citizens.

"Each of these newly naturalized U.S. citizens should be very proud of themselves," Sen. Brown said. "To become an American, they each needed to exhibit dedication and a passion for the United States and its ideals. This is a special country that believes every person deserves liberty and the opportunity for a better life. I hope that their new citizenship will encourage them to become active participants in our democracy."

Applauding Cleveland Company Selected to Build Exterior of the National Museum of African American History and Culture

Sen. Brown applauded the selection of Northstar Contracting, a Cleveland company, to construct the curtain wall exterior of the Smithsonian National Museum of African American History and Culture that is scheduled to open in 2016. The exterior will largely be constructed and assembled in Northstar's shop in Cleveland, before being shipped to Washington, D.C. to be mounted on the museum.

"I applaud Northstar Contracting for securing this project," Sen. Brown said. "Its selection to work on this historic museum reflects the skill and drive of Ohio's construction industry."

Applauding Appointment of Mahoning Valley Resident to Key Advisory Committee

In July, Sen. Brown applauded the White House's appointment of a Mahoning Valley resident and former Cincinnati resident to a key advisory committee. Anita Lin of Youngstown was appointed as a Member to the Advisory Committee on the Arts for the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts. Sen. Brown recommended Ms. Lin for the position. Her appointment is a testament to the creativity and talent of Ohio's citizens and their ability to lead.

Welcoming the Gay Games to Cleveland

In August, Sen. Brown and his wife, Pulitzer Prize-winning columnist Connie Schultz, opened the ninth annual Gay Games, held in Cleveland and Akron. The Gay Games are an international sporting and cultural event held every four years that provide a safe and affirming environment for LGBT competitors, though athletes of all sexual orientations and gender identities are invited to participate. As part of "Gay Games 9," Cleveland and Akron hosted 9,000 participants in 36 sporting events and an estimated 20,000 guests, performers, supporters, spectators, and volunteers.

"Connie and I are honored to open the 2014 Games and showcase the vibrancy and inclusiveness of northeast Ohio," Sen. Brown said. "We are excited to see the cities of Cleveland and Akron come together in a celebration of the athletic talent and pride found in the LGBT community."

Brecksville Resident Honored with Presidential Medal of Freedom

Sen. Brown announced that a Brecksville resident received the Presidential Medal of Freedom. Charles Sifford was a professional golfer who helped desegregate the Professional Golfers' Association (PGA) and went on to win several PGA events and the PGA Seniors' Championship. A native of Charlotte, North Carolina, Sifford won six National Negro Opens before successfully challenging the PGA's "Caucasian only" rule – despite harassment and death threats – in 1960. He won his first PGA title in 1967 and another in 1969. Sifford was inducted to the World Golf Hall of Fame in 2004.

"Charles Sifford is not only a world-class athlete, he is a civil rights leader who risked his safety for what is right," Sen. Brown said. "He has earned this great honor."

Warren Student Selected as White House Intern

Sen. Brown announced that the White House Internship Program has selected Christopher Kromer, of Warren, as one of nearly 150 participants in the 2014 White House Internship Program. Kromer is currently a student at The George Washington University Law School.

"Ohio is home to strong schools, families, and communities that have helped to equip young Ohioans like Christopher with the skills needed to lead," Sen. Brown said. "Mr. Kromer's family and the entire Warren community should be proud of this driven young man who embodies the integrity and intellectual insight needed to succeed in the White House."

Northwest Ohio Regional Highlights

Creating Jobs and Promoting Economic Development

Highlighting the Role of Ohio Workers and Businesses in the Super Bowl

Ohio's rich football history is matched only by the talent of its workers and the ingenuity of its manufacturers and businesses. Even though the Browns and Bengals did not play in this year's Super Bowl, we should be proud of the role Ohio-based companies played in preparing for the big game.

Oregon's Maumee Bay Turf Center helped install the playing surface of this year's game. The company, which specializes in synthetic and natural athletic field consultation, design, construction, maintenance, and renovation, also installed the synthetic field of Paul Brown Stadium, home of the Cincinnati Bengals. Every year since 1941, NFL championship games, including the Super Bowl, have featured game balls produced by Wilson. And since 1955, Wilson footballs have not just been American-made, but Ohio-made at the company's football factory in Ada.

Extending and Enhancing Tax Credit to Help Combat Poverty



Enhancing the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) should be a bipartisan goal. The President's call for action is the first step toward ensuring that Americans who work hard and take responsibility can take home more of their pay each month. As we continue our economic recovery, it's vital that we pursue policies that promote work and provide ladders of opportunity to more Ohioans. We can accomplish this by strengthening the EITC and raising the minimum wage for 1.3 million Ohioans.

Sen. Brown was in Toledo in February to announce a bill to answer a call made by both President Obama to expand the EITC. In conjunction with raising the federal minimum wage, Sen. Brown called for passage of the *Working Families Tax Relief Act* in order to strengthen the middle class and promote economic opportunity for all Americans. This bill would strengthen and expand the eligibility of the EITC and enhance the Child Tax Credit (CTC).

Applauding Ford's Announcement to Create Jobs at Lima Engine Plant

The U.S. auto industry is the best in the world, and Ohio's workers are a major reason why. Sen. Brown applauded Ford Motor Company's announcement that it will create 300 new jobs by investing \$500 million into its Lima Engine Plant. The investment will enable Ford to produce its new energy efficient, 2.7-liter EcoBoost for the 2015 Ford F-150. Ford's investment will strengthen both our state's proud auto industry and its growing manufacturing sector.

Creating Economic Opportunities in Wood County

In May, Sen. Brown's northwest Ohio regional representative delivered a legislative update to the Bowling Green Chamber of Commerce. During the event at the Grounds for Thought coffee

shop and bookstore, Sen. Brown's representative updated the Chamber on Sen. Brown's efforts to create jobs in northwest Ohio, promote investment opportunities, and ensure every American economic opportunity. Afterwards, Sen. Brown offered the following statement:

"Wood County has a strong workforce and business community, but we must do more to give our local businesses the opportunity to succeed. We can do that by focusing on manufacturing and rebuilding our infrastructure. Establishing a National Network of Manufacturing Innovation would create thousands of jobs and ensure the United States remains the global leader in advanced manufacturing. And by rebuilding our bridges and roads, we would strengthen our region's economic competitiveness while ensuring that thousands of hardworking Ohioans remain on the job."

Adding Cooper Tire Jobs in Findlay

In June, Sen. Brown applauded an announcement by the Cooper Tire & Rubber Company that it will construct a Global Technical Center (GTC) in Findlay. The facility will serve as Cooper Tire's international headquarters for tire science and technology and create 40 technical jobs. The GTC will be located on the site of Cooper Tire's current North American Technical Center.

"Today's announcement by Cooper Tire is a testament to the skill of its workers and the loyalty of the Findlay community," Sen. Brown said. "I applaud Cooper Tire for being an innovator and job creator in Ohio. The new Global Technical Center will strengthen the local economy and help make driving a little safer."

Training Ohio Workers for Careers

By leveraging skills and relationships in the educational, social services, and business communities, we can ensure that workers receive the hands-on training they need for new careers. Sen. Brown recently secured more than \$6 million in federal funding to retrain unemployed workers for careers in high-growth sectors. The U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) awarded WSOS Community Action, Inc. \$6.1 million through its "Ready to Work" Partnership Grant program. In September, Sen.

Brown wrote a letter to DOL urging support for the application. The program will serve 600 long-term unemployed individuals and veterans over a four-year period and provide skills training to prepare workers for positions in advanced manufacturing, information technology, health care, and environmental sectors.



Fighting for Ohio Auto Workers

The Chrysler Assembly Plant is critical to Toledo and the state's economy. Toledo auto workers have the knowledge, skills, and work ethic needed to continue this success and ensure Jeep stays right here in Toledo. Recently, Sen. Brown joined workers, local leaders, and community



members at United Auto Workers Local 12 to launch a community effort to keep the Jeep Wrangler made in Toledo. U.S. Rep. Marcy Kaptur, Toledo Mayor D. Michael Collins, Lucas County Commissioner Carol Contrada, and Bruce Baumhower and Ken Lortz from UAW also attended the event. Earlier this month, Sen. Brown and Rep. Kaptur wrote to Chrysler CEO Sergio Marchionne, urging him to keep production in Toledo. The Chrysler Assembly Plant – that has been building Jeeps since the 1940s – employs more than 6,000

workers and was twice recognized as the most efficient assembly plant in North America.

Working to Keep U.S. Postal Service Processing Centers in Toledo Open

Sen. Brown, along with 49 other senators, sent a letter to the Chairs and Ranking Members of the United States Senate Committee on Appropriations and the Subcommittee on Financial Services and General Government, urging them to prevent the planned closing and consolidation of several USPS mail processing facilities across the country.

The senators asked the Committee and Subcommittee to prevent all closings and consolidations in Fiscal Year 2015 through omnibus appropriations legislation or a continuing resolution, giving Congress time to pass comprehensive postal reform legislation to fund the Postal Service's operations.

“Closing Toledo's mail processing facility will deprive the community of hundreds of good-paying jobs, making it difficult for families to make ends meet,” Sen. Brown said. “Immediate action needs to be taken so workers can keep their jobs and continue providing reliable service for the city.”

Sen. Brown also recently joined 29 colleagues in a letter to Postmaster General Patrick Donahoe urging the U.S. Postal Service (USPS) to delay consolidation of up to 82 mail processing facilities nationally. Ohio currently has four facilities slated to be consolidated, including the Toledo Processing and Distribution Facility (P&DF). The letter to Donahoe follows a report by the U.S. Postal Service, Office of Inspector General that found the USPS failed to fulfill its obligations to study the impact of consolidation and properly notify local customers of these changes.

Strengthening Trade Enforcement to Protect Northwest Ohio Jobs

Assisting Northwest Ohio Workers

The loss of a job can be a devastating experience. Ohioans who work hard and play by the rules should not be left to struggle when they lose their job through no fault of their own. In February, Sen. Brown announced that more than 100 workers at Titan Tire Corporation in Bryan, including on-site leased workers from Staffmark, Aerotek, and Sob 1, were eligible to apply for worker adjustment assistance through the U.S. Department of Labor. These resources will help ensure that displaced workers in Bryan have the financial support and training opportunities to get a fresh start.

Defending American Auto Exports Against Chinese Violation of International Trade Law

In May, Sen. Brown and Sen. Portman applauded the World Trade Organization's (WTO) decision to defend the American auto industry from China's illegal tariffs on U.S. autos. Troubled by China's violation of WTO rules in application of anti-dumping duties and countervailing duties on American-made auto exports, Sen. Brown and Sen. Portman urged the United States Trade Representative (USTR) to investigate the tariffs and use all available tools to protect Ohio workers and businesses. As a result, President Obama filed a complaint to the WTO, which ruled that China must rescind these tariffs against American auto exports. This will directly benefit Ohio manufacturers of the Chrysler Jeep in Toledo.

Protecting Paulding County Cement Jobs

In July, Sen. Brown urged the Obama Administration to protect Paulding County's cement industry and the thousands of local jobs it supports. In a letter to United States Trade Representative (USTR) Michael Froman, Sen. Brown called for the Administration to crack down on Canada's attempt to illegally subsidize a cement plant in Quebec that would specifically target the U.S. market, hurting the ability of local manufacturers to compete. U.S. cement companies would be affected, including Lafarge North America, which has a plant in Paulding.

Announcing Trade Adjustment Assistance for Workers in Huron County

In July, Sen. Brown announced that employees of Epic Technologies, LLC in Norwalk, as well as on-site contracted employees from Aerotek, are eligible to apply for trade adjustment assistance through the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL). Displaced workers involved in activities related to the production of electronic printed circuit boards are qualified to apply for assistance.

Epic Technologies employees' previous certification, allowing them to apply for trade adjustment assistance, expired on July 12, 2014 and did not include on-site contracted employees from Aerotek. These resources will help ensure that displaced workers in Norwalk have the financial support and training opportunities needed for a fresh start.

Promoting Job-Driven Training Opportunities

In advance of a Toledo visit by Education Secretary Arne Duncan and Labor Secretary Thomas Perez, Sen. Brown underscored the need for job-driven training that addresses the gap between worker training programs and the needs of regional, high growth industries. In July, President Obama signed into law the *Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act* (WIOA), legislation that contains provisions modeled after Sen. Brown's *Strengthening Employment Clusters to Organize Regional Success* (SECTORS) Act that would help dislocated workers train for high-tech jobs in their region.

"With too many Americans still unable to find work, we must do all that we can to ensure that our workers are qualified to fill available jobs," Sen. Brown said. "I applaud Secretaries Duncan and Perez for their visit to Ohio and efforts to help close our country's skills gap. We can promote job-driven training by implementing provisions from my *SECTORS Act*. This will strengthen job training efforts and enable our schools to partner with U.S. industries to help them grow and flourish."

Helping Small Businesses Grow and Add Jobs

Supporting Small Businesses Affected By Extreme Weather

Small businesses are the life-blood of our economy. In February, Sen. Brown alerted small businesses and non-profit organizations in Lucas County of loans available through the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA). Because of excessive rain and cooler than normal temperatures beginning on April 1, 2013 in Lucas County, SBA offered working capital loans to help affected businesses recover from any weather related damages. The filing deadline to receive a capital loan was September 23, 2014. It is important that Ohio businesses in Lucas County that were affected by extreme weather are helped along on the road to recovery.

Creating and Expanding Jobs with Federal Loans



For close to a century, Ballreich's Bros. Inc. potato chip factory in Tiffin has been a great example of a small business that gives as much to its community as it receives. Not only does Ballreich's make a great product, but it cares about making it in a responsible way that adds jobs to the local economy. In March, Sen. Brown toured the potato chip factory, met with workers and management, and learned more about the company's use of federal Small Business Administration (SBA) loans to strengthen and create local jobs.

Founded in Tiffin in 1920, Ballreich's is a family-owned company that has won several awards, including being named Snack Food & Wholesale Bakery's "2014 Snack Manufacturer of the Year" as well as the SBA's "2010 Jeffery Butland Family-Owned Business of the Year" for the Cleveland District. Through the use of multiple SBA loans, in recent years Ballreich's has doubled its profits and its workforce.

New Federal Resources to Expand Ottawa County Small Business

In May, Sen. Brown was pleased to announce that SBI Venture Management, LLC in Put-in-Bay will receive a \$3,680,000 loan from the United States Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Rural Development branch's Business and Industry Guaranteed Loan program. SBI Venture Management, LLC will use the funds to construct floating docks and a break wall in Put-in-Bay, to refinance debt, and to finance the purchase of real estate. This project is expected to save five jobs and create 50 new jobs.

"Increased business development is great news for Put-in-Bay," Sen. Brown said. "This small business investment will help support jobs and boost the local economy."

Building Northwest Ohio Infrastructure and Transportation

Pressing U.S. Army Corps on Blanchard River Project

We know that flood control projects like Blanchard River's help spur economic growth and protect local communities from devastating disasters. The Findlay and Ottawa communities

have invested time and valuable financial resources into getting this project underway, and it is critical that the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) continue to do the same by providing the appropriate funds for its completion.

Sen. Brown joined with Sen. Portman and Rep. Latta in January to urge the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) to follow recommendations of the bipartisan Senate-House appropriations bill that would benefit the Blanchard River Flood Risk Management Project (BRFRMP). According to the *Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2014*, funding flood control projects like BRFRMP not only make communities safer, they can create jobs and improve local economies.

In March, Sen. Brown announced that USACE's 2014 Work Plan includes funding to complete its Chief Engineers' Report on the BRFRMP. Six years ago, \$70 million in damages occurred in Findlay and Ottawa, due to the worst flood those communities experienced in 100 years. But resources are still needed, and the U.S. Army Corps should prioritize funding to help bring the Blanchard River project closer to completion. Sen. Brown and his colleagues will continue to fight for the Findlay and Ottawa communities until this happens.

In May, the Senate passed a critical water infrastructure bill that includes an amendment Sen. Brown introduced that could expedite projects like the BRFRMP. The bipartisan amendment to the *Water Resources Reform and Development Act (WRRDA)* would ensure projects are eligible for federal construction funds upon completion of their U.S. Army Corp of Engineers (USACE) Chief of Engineer's Report. Without this amendment, BRFRMP would not be eligible to receive federal construction funds from USACE until the next WRRDA authorization. Sen. Brown successfully fought to ensure his amendment was included in WRRDA, which President Obama signed into law in June 2014.

Working to Dredge and Maintain the Great Lakes

Protecting the Great Lakes is about safeguarding our economy and the livelihood of thousands of Ohioans. We rely on the Great Lakes to transport goods necessary for our workers to work and our businesses to compete. According to the *Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2014*, funding Great Lakes navigation projects can create jobs, save taxpayers money, and improve local economies. But while the Great Lakes—especially Lake Erie—are vital to serving Ohio's economic needs, shipping channels have not been adequately maintained and there is a backlog of critical dredging needs.



Sen. Brown joined 12 of his colleagues in urging the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) to follow the recommendation of the bipartisan Senate-House appropriations bill and allocate \$30 million of the \$200 million dollars Congress appropriated to Great Lakes navigation projects towards Great Lakes dredging and maintenance. This would benefit Ohio taxpayers and jobs, and strengthen its economy.

Protecting Lake Erie from Asian Carp

Protecting the Great Lakes region and the Ohio River Basin from Asian carp is about protecting our regional economy and the livelihood of thousands of Ohioans. With thousands of jobs and billions of dollars at stake, we need to do everything we can to protect the Great Lakes from the threat of invasive species.

Sen. Brown announced that the University of Toledo will receive \$500,000 from the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) in order to help protect Lake Erie from the threat of invasive species like Asian carp. Specifically, the grant will be used towards developing “next-generation e-DNA sequencing” technology to better help identify the presence of invasive species in the Great Lakes region. This is excellent news for the Great Lakes region and the well-being of Ohio’s economy. Asian carp pose a serious threat to the health of Lake Erie and its tributaries. This grant is a much-needed step towards stopping the spread of invasive species. The EPA awarded the grant as a part of the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative (GLRI), an interagency effort to target the most significant problems in the region and jumpstart restoration efforts to protect, maintain, and restore the chemical, biological, and physical integrity of the Great Lakes.

In March, Sen. Brown and 10 of his Senate colleagues urged the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) to aggressively work towards implementing short term measures and finding a long term solution that would stop the spread of Asian carp into the Great Lakes. The senators also asked USACE for several updates on its progress implementing proposals from the Asian Carp Regional Coordinating Committee’s feasibility study released earlier in the year.

In May, Congress passed a critical water infrastructure bill that included an amendment introduced by Sen. Brown that would help prevent the invasion of Asian carp into the Ohio and Upper Mississippi River Basins. The bipartisan amendment was based on the *Strategic Response to Asian Carp Invasion Act* that Sen. Brown introduced in 2013. It would encourage more effective and efficient collaboration between state and local entities and the appropriate federal wildlife agencies that are working to slow the spread of Asian carp. Sen. Brown successfully fought for the *Water Resources Reform and Development Act* (WRRDA) to include a modified version of his amendment. WRRDA became law in June 2014.

Improving Lake Erie Water Quality and Conservation Practices

In March, Sen. Brown announced new federal funds to support a green infrastructure project in Toledo aimed at improving the water quality of Lake Erie. The funds were awarded by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) through the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative (GLRI), an interagency effort to protect the Great Lakes. Toledo will install bioswales, rain gardens, sand filters, and vernal ponds to stop sediment and stormwater from discharging into Lake Erie. These efforts will decrease the amount of untreated sediment and stormwater that discharges into the lake by 645,000 gallons.



In May, Sen. Brown, a senior member of the Senate Agriculture Committee, applauded an announcement by Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack that outlined the new Regional Conservation Partnership Program created by the 2014 Farm Bill. The new program classified the Great Lakes as a priority watershed, eligible for new federal funding to help improve the water quality and natural resources in surrounding areas.

“USDA’s efforts to boost conservation efforts means added resources to help clean up Western Lake Erie,” Sen. Brown said. “By linking conservation programs that improve water quality, reduce run-off, and increase wildlife habitats, local stakeholders now have the tools necessary to improve and implement crucial conservations efforts. This program illustrates that conservation can benefit agriculture while creating jobs and improving eco-tourism in Ohio.”

In June, Sen. Brown announced his co-sponsorship of legislation that would require a federal assessment of Lake Erie and other Great Lakes waters with significant cultural, historic, or archeological value for possible preservation as federal marine sanctuaries.

“The cultural and economic impact of Lake Erie and the Great Lakes has played a key role in the founding and development of the United States,” Sen. Brown said. “It is important that we protect these irreplaceable resources for generations to come. This legislation takes an important step in doing so.”

Sen. Brown also recently attended a hearing of the Senate Agriculture Committee entitled, “*Farmers and Fresh Water: Voluntary Conservation to Protect our Land and Waters.*” Sen. Brown introduced Toledo Mayor D. Michael Collins, who testified at the hearing, and urged approval of \$20 million in funds to reduce run-off and improve water quality in the Western Lake Erie Basin. At the hearing, Sen. Brown pressed Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) Chief Jason Weller on the Tri-State Western Lake Erie Basin Phosphorus Reduction Initiative application for funding through Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP), which provides funding to promote conservation efforts that ensure clean soil and water.

Keeping Ecological Threats Out of Lake Erie



Lake Erie is important to the economy of Northern Ohio and the livelihood of its citizens. Following a hearing of the Senate Committee on Environment & Public Works (EPW), Sen. Brown urged Congress to pass bipartisan legislation aimed at preserving the Great Lakes and bolstering economic growth throughout the Great Lakes region. Sen. Brown is the cosponsor of the *Great Lakes Ecological and Economic Protection Act (GLEEPA)*, which would protect

the Great Lakes—and the millions of jobs they support—from a variety of ecological threats and invasive species like Asian carp. It would accomplish this by fully funding the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative (GLRI). Congress must fully fund the GLRI in order to protect Ohio’s

drinking water and the thousands of fishing, boating, and recreation jobs that are dependent on clean and safe waters.

In July, Sen. Brown and more than a dozen Great Lakes senators sent a letter to John Gross, Director of the White House Council on Environmental Quality, expressing their continued commitment to practical, immediate solutions to the threat of Asian carp and other invasive species to the Great Lakes and Mississippi River basin.

“Lake Erie is important to the economy of Northern Ohio and the livelihood of its citizens,” Sen. Brown said. “The Administration must work with Congress to protect the Great Lakes and the thousands of fishing, boating, and recreation jobs that depend on them. In order to accomplish this, we need a coordinated effort between federal, state, and local governments and stakeholders to stop the spread of Asian carp. The White House’s leadership is important to this goal and helping to expedite this process.”

New Resources to Redevelop Northwest Ohio Brownfield Sites

Ohio’s Brownfield sites can be opportunities for redevelopment and new growth. In May, Sen. Brown announced new federal funds to support environmental Brownfield site assessments in Hardin and Lucas Counties. The funds were awarded to the Hardin County and the City of Toledo by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency’s (EPA) Fiscal Year 2014 Brownfields Assessment, Revolving Loan Fund, and Cleanup (ARC) program. These funds will help support clean-up and decontamination efforts critical to the safety and economic success of Hardin County and Toledo.

Working to Make Motorcoaches Safer

Following a bus crash involving members of the Bluffton University baseball team, Sen. Brown worked alongside Ohio families—including John and Joy Betts, whose son David died in the Bluffton accident—to introduce bipartisan legislation addressing tour bus safety. In June, Sen. Brown was recognized for his work to make motorcoaches safer for all Americans. Advocates for Highway Safety awarded Sen. Brown with the inaugural Sen. Frank Lautenberg Award for introducing and helping to pass into law the bipartisan *Motorcoach Enhanced Safety Act* that updated safety standards for new motorcoaches and other large buses. Sen. Brown was joined by John and Joy Betts in receiving recognition.

“When the Bluffton community was rocked by a fatal motorcoach accident, the victims’ families became courageous advocates for motorcoach safety and the need for Congressional action,” Sen. Brown said. “This award is about the memory of their loved ones and the fight to ensure the safety of all Americans. I thank the Advocates for Highway and Auto Safety for this recognition. And I thank John and Joy Betts who every day honor their son with their tireless work. Together we will continue this fight to save lives and prevent accidents like Bluffton from happening again.

Improving Water Quality in Sandusky Bay

Ohio’s rural communities and small towns face a heavy burden when financing infrastructure projects. Sen. Brown announced \$3 million in federal loans and nearly \$3 million in federal grants to support projects in Erie County aimed at improving water quality in Sandusky Bay. The

Erie County Commissioners will use the funding to construct a wastewater collection system serving the Village of Bay View and the Bay Bridge area. The Commissioners also plan to replace the waste treatment systems that discharge into the Sandusky Bay, 96 percent of which are failing and thereby creating pollution. This improvement project will provide residents and businesses with an improved water system that will benefit Lake Erie and encourage investment in Erie County.

Ensuring Funding for Ohio's Roads and Bridges

Northwest Ohio is home to more than 260 "structurally deficient" bridges. These bridges—located in every county of the state—depend on funding from a federal transportation bill for critical improvements and upgrades.

In June, Sen. Brown was in Toledo to call for a bipartisan approach to fixing America's highways and bridges by passing a long-term transportation bill. Sen. Brown held a press conference on the Anthony Wayne Bridge ("High Level Bridge") construction site, a project that is underway but could experience delays if the Highway Trust Fund is allowed to run out of funds.

New Resources for Northwest Airports

Sen. Brown was pleased to announce that Erie-Ottawa International Airport in Port Clinton, Put-in-Bay Airport, North Bass Island Airport, Lakefield Airport in Celina, Hardin County Airport and Williams County Regional Airport were awarded federal funds by the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT). Funds will be used to rehabilitate runways, repair pavement on terminal aprons, purchase snow removal equipment, and build taxiways. These federal dollars will go a long way in sustaining travel in and out of the airport for area residents and businesses.

Ensuring Our Water is Safe to Drink

Following the City of Toledo's announcement that it had lifted its drinking water ban, Sen. Brown announced that Ohio's joint application with Michigan and Indiana to improve water quality in the Western Lake Erie Basin has advanced to the next round for funding through the Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP). As the only Ohioan to serve on the Senate Agriculture Committee in more than 40 years, and as a member of the 2014 Farm Bill Conference Committee, Sen. Brown helped create the RCPP and has urged the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) to approve the Tri-State Application.

"While the ban has been lifted, our work to ensure safe drinking water has only begun," Sen. Brown said. "I'm pleased to announce that Ohio's joint application for Farm Bill funds to improve water quality in the Western Lake Erie Basin has advanced to the next round. We must incorporate regional, cutting-edge practices to prevent algal blooms and ensure safe drinking water."

Sen. Brown and Rep. Kaptur were in Toledo in August to announce new federal emergency funds and additional federal resources to reduce runoff in the Western Lake Erie Basin. “We can and must stop runoff before it starts,” Sen. Brown said. “But we all have to work together to tackle this threat and this new federal funding is such a critical component. But these federal funds are just the beginning – we need to utilize every available resource and innovation to reduce the risk for toxic growth, preserve the local environment, and protect our water supply.”



Continuing Support for Blanchard River Flood Risk Management Project

The long-term success of the Blanchard River Flood Risk Management Project requires all partners to work collaboratively and constructively to ensure local homeowners and businesses do not continue to be impacted by devastating floods. With U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) leadership touring flood-prone sections of the Blanchard River in August, Sen. Brown underscored his support of the Blanchard River Flood Risk Management Project (BRFRMP). Sen. Brown has been a steadfast advocate for the project, working closely with Congressman Bob Latta and Sen. Portman to ensure the project remains on track and fully funded. Lt. Col. Karl Jansen, commander of the USACE Buffalo division, toured sites in Putnam and Hancock Counties.

Improving Electrical Systems in Northwest Ohio

It can often be difficult for rural communities to fully fund critical infrastructure projects. In October, Sen. Brown announced that the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s (USDA) Rural Utilities Service – Electric Program (RUS – Electric Program) had awarded \$3,696,000 to North Western Electric Cooperative, Inc. in Bryan, an energy provider serving more than 6,000 homes and businesses in Defiance and Williams Counties. The funds will be used to build 11 miles of electric transmission and distribution lines, improving electric service delivery. According to the USDA, the RUS - Electric Program supports funding for improving, expanding, and maintaining electric infrastructure in order to improve the quality of life of America’s rural residents.

Supporting Servicemembers, Veterans, and Law Enforcement

Bryan Student Appointed to U.S. Military Academy at West Point

In February, Sen. Brown announced that the U.S. Military Academy at West Point had extended an Offer of Appointment to Bryan High School student Jason Hug. Sen. Brown nominated the Bryan resident for the Military Academy at West Point. “Ohio schools are educating the young people who will become the next generation of military leaders. I am proud that Jason has been offered the opportunity to attend one of our nation’s most prestigious institutions,” said Sen. Brown. “Mr. Hug’s family and the entire Bryan community should be proud of this dynamic young man, who embodies the integrity and courage needed to represent well and uphold the values of our nation.”

Jason attended Bryan High School in Williams County, where he played football, basketball, and baseball. He was a National Honor Society officer and had been named to the Northwest State Dean's List.

Each year, Sen. Brown nominates up to 10 students for each slot at our nation's service academies requiring congressional recommendations, including: the Air Force Academy; the Naval Academy; the Military Academy at West Point; and the Merchant Marine Academy. In 2014, because two openings were available at both the Air Force Academy and the Naval Academy, Sen. Brown nominated 20 students to those institutions. A nomination does not guarantee acceptance into a service academy. The Academy's Admissions Board ultimately decides who receives an appointment.

Thanking Veterans for Their Service and Working to Eliminate the VA Backlog



Military servicemen and women don't think of themselves when they courageously answer the call of duty. Their only concern is serving their country in order to protect our freedoms. Now that they're home, they should be assured a roof over their head and the benefits and services they earned. During National Salute to Veteran Patients Week in February, Sen. Brown visited northwest Ohio veterans at the Toledo Community Based Outpatient Clinic (CBOC) to thank them for their service and

discuss his efforts to ensure they receive the benefits and services they have earned. Earlier in the week, Sen. Brown met with then Secretary of the Department of Veterans Affairs Eric Shinseki, to press him on eliminating the VA backlog and ending veterans' homelessness.

Renovating Ohio Veterans' Home in Erie County

Our veterans deserve first-class facilities that match the first-class service they have provided to our country. Sen. Brown, a senior member of the Senate Veterans Affairs Committee, announced new federal resources to aid in service upgrades and the renovation of the electrical panel at the Ohio Veterans Home in Sandusky. Constructed in 1888, the Sandusky Home has offered nursing and hospice care for veterans for more than 120 years. The Home also specializes in providing care to veterans with Alzheimer's disease. These new federal resources will help improve the living accommodations for veterans at the Sandusky Home, while working to fulfill the promise made by our country to take care of those who have served us.

Assisting Veterans with War-Relation Injuries

When veterans seek claims for war-related injuries like post-traumatic stress and traumatic brain injury, the burden for establishing the connection should be on the Department of Defense, not on the veteran. With nearly 300,000 American veterans struggling with Post-Traumatic Stress (PTS) and another 25,000 veterans facing mild Traumatic Brain Injuries (mTBI), Sen. Brown, a senior member of the Senate Veterans Affairs Committee, was in Northwood to outline a new plan to help active duty servicemembers better track potential exposures during deployment that could be later connected to mental health injuries and mild TBI during deployments. Without proper documentation or a visible, physical injury, it is often difficult for veterans to establish a

connection between injuries and military service. This lack of documentation can lead to improper medical care and increases in the disability claims backlog.

Currently, veterans who file compensation and disability claims, or seek medical care, must provide the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) with evidence that connects their claim to previous military service. In cases and conditions such as PTS and mTBI, veterans must provide either a written testimony from other servicemembers who witnessed the accident, provide relevant medical documentation that supports the claim, or possess military orders that prove the veteran was in a unit or location that supports the claim. These types of documentation however provide only a secondary account of the claim and may not fully illustrate the veteran's claim of service connected PTS and mild TBI.

New Resources for Northwest Ohio Firefighters

Firefighters put their lives on the line each day to keep our communities safe. It is important that Ohio's responders have the staff and equipment necessary to keep residents safe.

Sen. Brown was pleased to announce new federal resources awarded to fire departments in northwest Ohio for hiring by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security's Federal Emergency Management Agency Assistance to Firefighters Grants (AFG) Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response (SAFER) grant program. The Tiffin Fire/Rescue Division in Seneca County and the Fostoria Fire Division serving Hancock, Seneca, and Wood Counties were awarded funds to hire firefighters. With so many communities already facing budget shortfalls, critical federal efforts like SAFER are pivotal in keeping our Ohio cities, towns, and villages safe.

Sen. Brown also announced that the Lima Fire Department, the Middle Point Fire Department, the City of Northwood Fire Department, the Ohio City Volunteer Fire Department, and the Wren Volunteer Fire Department were awarded resources for operations and safety by FEMA's AFG program. These new federal resources will help ensure that northwest Ohio communities have the skilled responders and updated resources they need to safely do their jobs.

The following departments received new federal resources to ensure that northwest Ohio's skilled responders have the updated resources they need to safely do their jobs:

- Mercer County: Chickasaw Community Mutual Fire Company
- Wood County: Perrysburg Fire Division, City of Northwood Fire Department
- Hancock County: Bluffton Fire Department
- Lucas County: Richfield Township Fire Department
- Huron County: Plymouth Volunteer Fire Department
- Defiance County: Defiance Fire and Rescue Division

Standing Up for Ohio Veterans

In November, Sen. Brown – a member of the Senate Veterans' Affairs Committee – visited Griffin House, an apartment complex serving homeless veterans, to outline a plan to further support the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) goal of eliminating veteran homelessness by 2015. Sen. Brown outlined how *The Homeless Veterans Prevention Act* would improve

homelessness prevention programs by developing public-private partnerships focused on increasing the availability of legal services to homeless veterans; expanding transitional housing opportunities to include increased resources and eligibility for female veterans and veterans with dependents; and increasing existing programs. According to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), 62,619 veterans were determined to be homeless during a “point-in-time” survey conducted on a single night in January 2012.

Fighting for Ohio Veterans

Sen. Brown announced federal funding in October and December to provide rental assistance and clinical services for homeless veterans in northwest Ohio as part of the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development-Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing (HUD-VASH) voucher program. This funding will provide rental for homeless veterans, while partnering them with a local Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) medical center.

“Veterans who serve their country in order to protect our freedoms should never face homelessness,” Sen. Brown said. “This rental assistance for homeless veterans is an important step in honoring the promise to support those who have already given so much to our nation.”

As the only Ohio senator to serve a full term on the Senate Veterans Affairs Committee, Sen. Brown continues to work to address issues facing Ohio veterans.

Protecting and Supporting Northwest Ohio Consumers

Protecting Northwest Ohio College Students



Education has always provided Americans the opportunity for a middle-class life and financial security. But an entire American generation is struggling with the weight of student loan debt, unable to start businesses, purchase homes, and contribute to their families and communities. For our country to continue growing, we have to ensure that student loan debt doesn't keep future generations from pursuing higher education.

With student loan debt now exceeding \$1 trillion, and many aspiring college students now receiving financial aid letters, Sen. Brown announced a plan at Perrysburg High School that would protect college students and their families from confusing private student loan practices, and help graduates with costly private student loans refinance their debt. As the cost of tuition rises, the average debt for a student graduating this year is about \$30,000. Prospective and current students deserve clear information as they take on student debt. And graduates with private loan debt should have the opportunity to refinance their debt so they can focus more on using their education rather than paying for it.

Supporting Social Security, Medicare, and Healthcare

Protecting Toledo Seniors from Unfair Medicare Costs

When seniors are transferred from a hospital to a nursing home for further care, they should be able to focus on their recovery instead of technicalities that could lead to sky high medical bills. Sen. Brown visited the Lutheran Home in Toledo to announce a plan that would end an arbitrary Medicare policy causing seniors to be unknowingly hit with large, unfair costs after receiving necessary post-acute medical care. Under current Medicare policy, a beneficiary must have an “inpatient” hospital stay of at least three days in order for Medicare to cover post-hospitalization skilled nursing care. Patients that receive hospital care on “observation status” do not qualify for this benefit, even if their hospital stay lasts longer than three days. Sen. Brown’s *Improving Access to Medicare Coverage Act* would help ensure that seniors receive the care they need without incurring unexpected and unfair costs.



Alerting Northwest Ohioans of Local Resources Available to Help Enroll in New Health Insurance Marketplace

With the deadline for Ohioans to enroll for health care approaching, Sen. Brown joined local navigators in Toledo to call attention to local resources available for northwest Ohio residents planning to purchase health insurance through the new health insurance marketplace. At the event, local navigators took appointments and walk-in meetings to help local citizens enroll in an affordable, high-quality health plan.

New Federal Funds for Community Health Center Development in Toledo

In April, Sen. Brown announced that Neighborhood Health Association, a medical home serving Lucas County, and Health Partners of Western Ohio, a group of medical centers serving Allen, Clark, and Hardin Counties, received new resources from the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) to support and develop primary care health services.

“Community health centers play a vital role in helping Ohioans obtain access to primary and preventive health care services,” said Sen. Brown. “These new federal resources will help Neighborhood Health Association and Health Partners of Western Ohio provide affordable and accessible health care to more of northwest Ohio’s children, seniors, and parents.”

Welcoming Ohio Northern Pharmacy Students to Washington D.C.

In May, Sen. Brown met with students from Ohio Northern University’s pharmacy program. The students attended Sen. Brown’s weekly coffee with constituents during their visit to Washington D.C. for the National Community Pharmacists Association’s 2014 Legislative Conference.

“It was an honor to meet with the Ohio Northern University pharmacy students,” Sen. Brown said. “These bright young students exemplify the intelligence and drive fostered at Ohio colleges and universities.”

Applauding Health and Wellness Expo for Lucas County Seniors

The important work done by the Area Office on Aging of Northwestern Ohio empowers seniors across the region. Promoting wellness is vital to ensuring that Ohio's seniors live long, healthy lives. In May, Sen. Brown applauded the Area Office on Aging of Northwest Ohio, Inc. on hosting the 37th annual "Spring Fling" in Sylvania for over 2000 seniors. This year's Spring Fling focused on health and wellness and included health screenings, demonstrations, and more than 100 exhibitors.

Strengthening Addiction Treatment



Americans all across the country have been affected by the growing public health crisis caused by opioid use. With a record 1,914 Ohioans dying from drug overdose in 2012, Sen. Brown visited the Zepf Center in Toledo recently to outline a plan to help fight the scourge of opiate abuse wreaking havoc throughout Ohio. Sen. Brown announced his support for *The Recovery Enhancement for Addiction Treatment Act* (TREAT Act), legislation that would change U.S. law to enable more health care

providers to treat larger numbers of patients struggling with addiction.

The TREAT Act would increase the number of patients that providers are allowed to treat in an outpatient setting and, for the first time, allow qualified nurse practitioners and physician assistants to treat addicted patients.

Strengthening Northwest Ohio Neighborhoods: Keeping Ohio Families in Their Homes

Supporting Community Development in Lucas County

Ohio is on the frontline of the foreclosure crisis. Foreclosures hurt the credit of American families, depress local property values, and weaken communities. Sen. Brown was pleased to announce a new neighborhood development grant for NeighborWorks Toledo Region in Lucas County. Awarded by NeighborWorks® America, the grant will be used to promote and preserve affordable housing for residents of Lucas County, and create or sustain jobs through local NeighborWorks-supported projects. NeighborWorks Toledo Region is one of eight recipients of the new neighborhood development grants across Ohio.

Promoting Affordable Housing and Maintaining Critical Infrastructure in Northwest Ohio

It can often be difficult for rural communities to fully fund critical infrastructure and housing projects. In March, Sen. Brown announced new federal resources for communities in northwest Ohio through Department of Agriculture's Office of Rural Development. Funds will provide for the purchase of a new police cruiser in the Village of Delta in Fulton County through Rural Development's Community Facility Loan and Grant program. Harbor Town Senior Residence, LLC in Wood County will receive funds through Rural Development's Rural Rental Housing Guaranteed Loan program to build 69 units of affordable rental housing for residents making less than 50 or 60 percent of the area's median income. These funds from the Agriculture

Department will help ensure that the Village of Delta has the equipment it needs and that Wood County has affordable housing options for residents.

Helping Struggling Homeowners Avoid Tax Increases



With the housing markets beginning to recover, we must continue to provide the resources necessary to protect homeownership and strengthen Ohio communities. That includes Congress coming together to take immediate action to pass the *Mortgage Forgiveness Tax Relief Act*. This critical extension would provide tax relief to individuals who have gone through mortgage modifications or worked with their bank to sell their homes.

With more than 33 percent of Lucas County mortgages underwater, Sen. Brown visited Toledo in January to call for immediate Congressional action to reverse a tax increase imposed on struggling homeowners that began on January 1. Before the New Year, Senate Republicans refused to take up and pass legislation that would have relieved for one year the requirement for homeowners to pay taxes on mortgage debt forgiveness resulting from mortgage modifications, or short sales. Without this legislation, principal reductions that homeowners receive on their loans through mortgage modifications or short sales will be treated as income by the Internal Revenue Service (IRS)—sticking already struggling homeowners with tax bills that they may be unable to afford.

Protecting Allen County from Drastic Increase in Flood Insurance Policies

With more than 220 home, property, and business owners in Allen County potentially facing drastic increases in the price of their flood insurance, Sen. Brown applauded passage of a new bipartisan bill that would protect Ohioans from huge flood insurance premiums increases. Sen. Brown fought to pass the bipartisan *Homeowner Flood Insurance Affordability Act*, which was passed by the Senate on March 13th and was signed into law by the President on March 21st.

This law ensures that Allen County citizens no longer face the uncertainty of steep increases in their flood insurance policies or the devastating effect of having their property value decrease because of inaccurate mapping. Ohioans who live in or near flood plains should not be forced to pay exorbitant premiums to protect their piece of the American dream.

Supporting Northwest Ohio's Agricultural and Rural Economy

New Resources for Rural Economic Development

Sen. Brown announced that WSOS Community Action in Fremont will receive a grant from the United States Department of Agriculture Rural Community Development Initiative Program. The funds will be used to implement the HomeTown Competitiveness program, a strategy for developing rural communities by investing in local assets. The Cities of Fremont, Geneva, and Somerset and Morgan County will benefit from these funds. WSOS will also utilize a portion of this grant to conduct comprehensive economic development planning with the City of Willard.

In November 2013, Sen. Brown wrote a letter to the USDA urging consideration of WSOS Community Action's application.

"Ohio's rural communities will benefit greatly from this investment," Sen. Brown said. "These funds from the U.S. Department of Agriculture will help support economic growth throughout the state."

Bringing the New Farm Bill to Northwest Ohio

In July, the office of Sen. Brown joined the Ohio Farmers Union for a 2014 Farm Bill Implementation Forum on the Bowling Green State University campus. The forum focused on key provisions of the newly implemented bill – including new crop insurance provisions, rural development support, local food financing, and general best practices for Ohio's rural and agricultural communities.

New Federal Funds Announced for Lake Erie Coastal Wetlands

Sen. Brown recently announced that the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) Great Lakes Restoration Initiative (GLRI) awarded nonprofit organization Ducks Unlimited \$1,488,944 for infrastructure improvements needed to restore 568 acres of Lake Erie coastal wetlands on the Howard Farms property in Maumee.

"Lake Erie is so important to Ohio – providing drinking water, jobs, and recreation for millions of Ohioans," Sen. Brown said. "These resources from the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative will help us to preserve Lake Erie and keep it healthy for generations of Ohioans to enjoy."

Sen. Brown is the co-sponsor of the *Great Lakes Ecological and Economic Protection Act* (GLEEPA), which would protect the Great Lakes—and the millions of jobs they support—from a variety of ecological threats and invasive species like harmful algal blooms.

Preventing Algal Blooms in Lake Erie

This summer's water crisis underscores the need to approach the issue of harmful algae blooms at all levels – local, state, and federal. Sen. Brown is committed to ensuring that all Ohioans have access to clean, safe, and affordable water. Sen. Brown joined officials from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and U.S. Rep. Marcy Kaptur in Oregon recently to announce more than \$8.6 million in new federal resources to address and prevent harmful algal blooms (HABs) in Lake Erie. Since the ban on drinking water in Toledo this summer, Sen. Brown has helped secure \$15 million in federal funding to improve water quality, help reduce phosphorus runoff, and prevent pollution in the Lake Erie Watershed.

Applauding Plan to Manage Blanchard River Flooding

The Blanchard River has repeatedly spilled over its banks, causing severe flooding in the City of Findlay and the Village of Ottawa. In November, Sen. Brown applauded the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' announcement that the Blanchard River Flood Management Project has reached an important milestone. During a press conference in Findlay, officials from the USACE Buffalo District outlined the Tentatively Selected Plan (TSP) – approved by USACE headquarters last month – which will guide efforts to advance the flood risk management project on the Blanchard River.

“I applaud community members and business partners for advancing this effort and will continue to urge the Army Corps of Engineers to work quickly to advance this project and complete the Chiefs Report,” Sen. Brown said.

Other Northwest Regional Highlights

New Federal Funds for Head Start Programs

In April, Sen. Brown announced new federal funds to support Head Start programs run by Hancock Hardin Wyandot Putnam Community Action Commission (HHWP CAC), an agency dedicated to aiding low- and moderate-income residents; Northwestern Ohio Community Action Commission, Inc., an agency in northwest Ohio working to eliminate poverty; and Toledo Public Schools. The funds were awarded by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

Sen. Brown, in November, announced \$1,566,368 in new federal funds to support Head Start programs run by Northwest Ohio Community Action Commission, an anti-poverty organization serving Defiance, Fulton, Henry, Paulding, Van Wert, and Williams Counties.

“This is excellent news for northwest Ohio families and their children,” Sen. Brown said. “Head Start ensures that children have the skills they need to succeed in elementary school and beyond.”

Head Start is a federal program that provides children, until the age of five, from low-income families with programming to prepare them for school. These programs, including health, nutrition, and social services, are designed to ensure their healthy cognitive, social, and emotional development.

Welcoming Ohioans to Washington D.C.

In May, Sen. Brown met with Gordon Winke, a Port Clinton native, at his weekly coffee with constituents. Mr. Winke received his undergraduate degree from Bowling Green State University. Mr. Winke later served as an intern in Sen. Brown’s Washington, D.C. office.

“It was an honor to meet with Mr. Winke,” Sen. Brown said. “Bright young leaders like Gordon exemplify the intelligence and drive fostered at Ohio colleges and universities.”

Sen. Brown also met with Jefferson Awards for Public Service recipients Timothy Macke of Lima; Jordan Keefe and Jay Mirrow of Toledo; Ashlee Balcerzak, Shannon Dolley, Allison Hinsey, Cheyanne Laux, Daniel Ostberg, and Lindsey Smith of Maumee High School; and Mackenzie Cupp and Nate Dusseau of Springfield High School during their visits to Washington. Macke received recognition for his work leading a volunteer rescue group called “Second Responders.” Macke has recruited more than 40 volunteers to the group which assists area residents – especially single mothers and senior citizens – in preparing for natural disasters.

Keefe received recognition for founding Save the Feet, a charity which collects shoes for children abroad who are in need. Mirrow received the award for his work matching tutors and mentors with elementary school students in Toledo and creating a database to track student

behavior and performance, meetings with tutors or mentors, and the material reviewed. Both Maumee High School and Springfield High School received awards based on the various community service efforts of their Students in Action groups.

In July, Sen. Brown met with Madeline Petee, a Perrysburg native and rising senior at Wittenberg University. Petee interned in Washington, D.C. over the summer for a healthcare lobbying firm. Sen. Brown met with Petee at his weekly coffee with constituents in Washington, D.C.

In November, Sen. Brown met with Stevan Jechura, a Maumee native and senior at The Ohio State University (OSU), where he studies political science, history, and psychology, as components of a petitioned major. Jechura is an OSU John Glenn Fellow and completed a semester internship in Washington, D.C. with the Federal Communications Commission (FCC). Sen. Brown met with Jechura at his weekly coffee with constituents in Washington, D.C.

Southwest Ohio Regional Highlights

Creating Jobs and Promoting Economic Development

Redeveloping GM Plant in Moraine

Bringing life back to the General Motors (GM) plant in Moraine is not only a great thing for the residents of the Miami Valley, it shows what can happen when a community rallies behind a project and brings diverse stakeholders to the table. In January, Sen. Brown applauded the announcement that Fuyao Glass Industry Group Co. – a producer of auto safety glass – will redevelop the former GM plant in Moraine. Since 2008, Sen. Brown has been a steadfast advocate for the redevelopment of the former automotive plant and has worked with local, state, and federal officials to secure more than \$25 million in federal resources to aid the cleanup and redevelopment of the site.

In May, Sen. Brown applauded the announcement that Fuyao Glass Industry Group Co. – a producer of auto safety glass – has finalized its agreement to purchase the former General Motors (GM) plant in Moraine. Since 2008, Sen. Brown has been a steadfast advocate for the redevelopment of the former automotive plant and has worked with local, state, and federal officials to secure more than \$25 million in federal resources to aid in the cleanup and redevelopment of the site.

“Fuyao’s commitment to repurposing the plant is great news for the City of Moraine and the residents of the Miami Valley,” Sen. Brown said. “Since 2009, I have worked with community leaders and the federal government to ensure the site was primed for redevelopment. With one in eight jobs in Ohio connected to the auto industry, Fuyao’s decision to locate here underscores the strength of Ohio’s manufacturing sector and the unbeatable quality of our workforce.”



Calling for a Fair Minimum Wage



Ohioans who work hard and play by the rules should be able to take care of their families. But too many are working harder than ever – and barely getting by. Working full-time in a minimum wage job in Ohio pays about \$16,000 per year – which isn’t much to live on when you’re trying to put food on the table, fill your gas tank, send your children to school, and provide a safe place for them to live. Ensuring a fair wage is good for middle class families and good for our economy.

Elizabeth Dandridge, a teacher’s assistant at Cincinnati Union Bethel’s Head Start Program, joined Sen. Brown as his guest to President Obama’s State of the Union address. Sen. Brown and Ms. Dandridge highlighted the nearly 1.3 million Ohioans who would receive a pay raise if the minimum wage was increased to \$10.10 an hour, as Sen. Brown has proposed. The base

wage for workers in Ms. Dandridge's position is \$8.67 an hour. While Dandridge makes more due to additional credentialing, she still struggles to make ends meet and has been involved in organizing efforts for a fair minimum wage. In his address, President Obama announced an executive order to raise the minimum to \$10.10 for all individuals working on new federal contracts. Sen. Brown is a cosponsor of the *Fair Minimum Wage Act*, legislation that would raise the federal minimum wage for the first time in more than 20 years and would result in a raise for millions of Ohio workers.

Protecting Ohio Jobs and Keeping Airline Passengers Safe

Sen. Brown urged the Transportation Security Administration (TSA) to protect the jobs and safety of Ohioans by keeping its field offices in Cleveland and Cincinnati open. In February, the Federal Air Marshal Service announced its plans to realign offices and workforce across the country, including the expected closure of Cleveland and Cincinnati field offices by June 2016. The TSA should work to save local jobs by keeping its offices in Cleveland and Cincinnati open. Ohioans have dedicated years of hard work and quality service to the Federal Air Marshal Service. They and their families have earned the right not to be uprooted. Closing these important offices could put the safety of Ohioans at risk.

Highlighting Innovative Manufacturing to Create Jobs

In March, Sen. Brown met with David Hopkins, President of Wright State University, to highlight an innovative plan by university and community leaders to create a Center for Manufacturing Sciences (CMS). The CMS program will create an industry-focused training center that unites Wright State University students with leading Miami Valley manufacturers to help further grow the manufacturing sector in Ohio.

This innovative manufacturing center at Wright State University will help rebuild our state's manufacturing sector while creating new jobs and strengthening our middle class. By developing innovative partnerships that combine industry with leading education partners like Wright State, we ensure that American workers and businesses have the resources they need to develop the next generation of high-tech manufacturing industries.

Applauding Whirlpool's Decision to Restore Jobs

Sen. Brown praised the March announcement by the Whirlpool Corporation that it will invest \$40 million and re-shore 400 new jobs to its Greenville manufacturing facility. The Greenville plant, which opened for production in 1942, produces more than 10,000 KitchenAid stand mixers per day. Whirlpool's decision to expand production in Ohio and bring jobs back from China is a testament to the strength of Ohio's manufacturing sector and the quality of Ohio's workers. This expansion not only boosts jobs and the economy of our state, it also proves that you should always bet on the American worker and the quality of our products.

Investing in Cincinnati to Create Jobs

Sen. Brown praised an April announcement by General Electric (GE) that it will locate its new U.S. Global Operations Center in Cincinnati. The facility is expected to create 1,400 new jobs by 2017, with additional jobs expected in subsequent years. GE's decision to expand operations in Ohio is a testament to the quality of Ohio's workforce. This investment will create hundreds of jobs and further build upon the legacy of GE Aviation in the Cincinnati area. Sen. Brown attended the new facility's groundbreaking in July.

The Center will be one of five worldwide and will focus on providing support services for the company's engine, appliance, and technology divisions. GE Aviation, headquartered in Evendale, is the world's leading manufacturer of commercial and military aircraft engines.



Training Workers for High-Growth Jobs

Addressing our country's skills gap is critical to filling open positions and meeting the demands for high-tech job growth. We know economic development and workforce skills training go hand-in-hand. When the skilled workers are there, more investments follow.



As leaders in the Senate continued critical negotiations to reauthorize the *Workforce Investment Act*, Sen. Brown toured a Dayton-area industrial maintenance training program and a Cincinnati-based valve manufacturer to highlight his *Strengthening Employment Clusters to Organize Regional Success (SECTORS) Act of 2013*. Sen. Brown's bipartisan *SECTORS Act* would address the skilled labor shortage by helping unemployed local workers train for local jobs in high-growth industries. By partnering local employers with local workforce boards, labor unions, and job training programs like the SkillsTrac Program at Sinclair Community College, we can ensure a clusters-based job growth strategy that improves our economic competitiveness while reducing the unemployment rate.

Commending Job Creation in the Miami Valley

With Ohio's proximity to large population center coupled with our expansive network of rail and highways, Ohio is perfect place for companies looking to grow their distribution networks. Sen. Brown praised the May announcement by Cincinnati-based Procter & Gamble to locate its Midwest distribution center in the City of Union. The investment is estimated to create 800 new jobs in the supply-chain and logistics industry. Procter & Gamble's investment in Ohio is a testament to the strength to Ohio's workforce and our excellence in the logistics and supply-chain industry.

Supporting Southwest Ohio's Aerospace Manufacturing Community

In May, Sen. Brown applauded an announcement by Commerce Secretary Penny Pritzker that the Southwest Ohio Aerospace Regional (SOAR) project has been named one of 12 communities designated by the Investing in Manufacturing Communities Partnership initiative. The SOAR project is supported by the Cities of Dayton and Cincinnati as a way to spur aerospace manufacturing in the region. Sen. Brown sent a letter to the Economic Development Agency (EDA) in support of the proposal.



This designation by the EDA will help local officials attract new business opportunities while accelerating growth among existing manufacturers. SOAR combines the aviation history of Dayton with the aeronautical engineering legacy of Cincinnati, helping attract jobs to southwest Ohio and increase the overall viability of Ohio's aerospace industry.

Providing Academic and Job Skills Training for At-Risk Youth

Helping young people get a foothold in the workforce is critical to Ohio's long-term success. We must pay special attention to at-risk youth and ensure they have the opportunity to get a good education and the job skills they need to succeed. In August, Sen. Brown announced that County Corp in Dayton was awarded federal funding to provide academic and job skills training for at-risk youth by the U.S. Department of Labor's YouthBuild program. YouthBuild is an alternative education program for students between the ages of 16 and 24 who have been in the juvenile justice system, are aging out of foster care, have dropped out of high school, or have other risk factors that could prevent them from reaching key educational and career milestones.

Working to Keep U.S. Postal Service Processing Centers in Dayton Open

With the United States Postal Service (USPS) Dayton Processing and Distribution Centers scheduled to close in 2015, Sen. Brown, along with 49 other senators, sent a letter to the Chairmen and Ranking Members of the United States Senate Committee on Appropriations and the Subcommittee on Financial Services and General Government, urging them to prevent the planned closing and consolidation of several USPS mail processing facilities across the country. To cut costs, USPS plans to close 82 mail processing facilities in 2015, eliminating up to 15,000 jobs and slowing down service delivery.

The senators asked the Committee and Subcommittee to prevent all closings and consolidations in Fiscal Year 2015 through omnibus appropriations legislation or a continuing resolution, giving Congress time to pass comprehensive postal reform legislation to fund the Postal Service's operations.

"Closing Dayton's mail processing facility will deprive the community of hundreds of good-paying jobs, making it difficult for families to make ends meet," Sen. Brown said. "Immediate action needs to be taken so workers can keep their jobs and continue providing reliable service for the city."

Sen. Brown also recently joined 29 colleagues in a letter to Postmaster General Patrick Donahoe urging the U.S. Postal Service (USPS) to delay consolidation of up to 82 mail processing facilities nationally. Ohio currently has four facilities slated to be consolidated, including the Dayton Processing and Distribution Centers (P&DC). Without the delay requested by Sen. Brown, the USPS will begin consolidation in January 2015. The letter to Donahoe follows a report by the U.S. Postal Service, Office of Inspector General that found the USPS failed to fulfill its obligations to study the impact of consolidation and properly notify local customers of these changes.

Advocating for Ohio's Unemployed

Ohioans who work hard and play by the rules should not be left to struggle when they lose their job through no fault of their own. Sen. Brown announced that employees of YUSA Corporation in Washington Court House are eligible to apply for trade adjustment assistance through the U.S. Department of Labor. On-site contracted factory and warehouse employees from Staffmark Temporary Services, Remedy Staffing, I Force, and Employment Plus are also eligible. Eligible employees include workers involved in activities related to the production of automotive vulcanized rubber components who were partially or totally separated from employment on or after September 24, 2013. This eligibility continues for up to two years after the October 17, 2014 date of certification.

Protecting Southwest Ohio's Paper Industry

We must stand up for workers and manufacturers in our domestic paper industry. Sens. Brown and Portman and Rep. Mike Turner called on the International Trade Commission to protect Ohio workers and domestic paper manufacturers like West Carrollton's Appvion Papers, Inc. The letter calls for continuation of current dumping margins on lightweight thermal paper (LWTP) from China and Germany. Sens. Brown and Portman successfully led a similar effort in 2011, which caused the Commerce Department to reverse its previous ruling and provide needed protection to Appleton. Rep. Turner has been leading the effort on the House side in support of Appleton and their ability to compete fairly.



Urging NCAA to Keep Opening March Madness Games in Dayton

Basketball fans know that March Madness starts in Dayton, Ohio. For more than a decade, Dayton and the Miami Valley has hosted the opening round games. The tournament provides an economic boost for small businesses and showcases one of Ohio's top cities. Sens. Brown and Portman and Rep. Turner joined in a letter to NCAA President Dr. Mark Emmert in support of the University of Dayton's bid to remain the host for the opening round of NCAA Men's Division 1 basketball tournament through 2018. Dayton has hosted the First Four games since 2011 and has hosted more tournament games than any other site in the country.

Strengthening Trade Enforcement to Protect Southwest Ohio Jobs

Defending Ohio Manufacturers from Illegal Chinese Trade Practices

In January, Sen. Brown joined with Sen. Portman in applauding a decision by the office of the United States Trade Representative (USTR) to protect steel producers such as Butler County-based AK Steel from illegal Chinese trade practices. Specifically, the USTR will challenge China's refusal to comply with World Trade Organization regulations on grain oriented flat-rolled electrical steel. "The Administration needs to do everything in its power to protect the American steel industry and the domestic workers and businesses it supports," Sen. Brown said. "That means not allowing countries like China to circumvent international law and putting our country's steel industry on an unfair playing field. By standing up to China, the USTR is standing up for AK Steel and Ohio jobs."

Levelling the Playing Field for Ohio Companies

Manufacturing is the backbone of the American economy, and Ohio manufacturers can compete with any in the world. But they deserve to compete on a level playing field. That means holding countries that violate trade law by illegally dumping their products into our markets accountable.

In the wake of a U.S. Department of Commerce ruling drastically reducing antidumping margins on a German paper manufacturer, Sen. Brown joined with Sen. Portman and Rep. Turner to call on the Obama Administration to protect workers and domestic manufacturers like West Carrollton's Appvion Papers, Inc. (formerly Appleton Paper). The letter followed the preliminary results of an administrative review announced in December 2013 that placed a zero percent antidumping margin on Koehler Paper Company.

This zero percent ruling significantly differs from an April 2013 review that placed a 75.36 percent duty on all lightweight thermal paper (LWTP) imported from Koehler. Additionally, Sen. Brown, Sen. Portman, and Rep. Turner called on the Commerce Department to use its legal authority under U.S. trade law to address fraudulent behavior by foreign companies dumping into domestic markets.

When we hold countries accountable for illegal trade practices, we help ensure that American companies like Byer Steel in Cincinnati can continue to provide quality American-made rebar to help build the next generation of American infrastructure.

Sen. Brown and Sen. Portman joined a bipartisan group of 31 U.S. Senators in a letter to Commerce Secretary Penny Pritzker urging the Department to continue to investigate illegal dumping and subsidies on unfairly traded imports of steel reinforcing bars (rebar) from Turkey and Mexico. The successful conclusion of these investigations is critical to protecting American companies and workers making rebar, including Cincinnati's David J. Joseph Company, Byer Steel Group, and Gerdau Long Steel. These companies must



compete with illegally-dumped imports that are undercutting the U.S. market.

Assisting Southwest Ohio Workers

In February, Sen. Brown announced that approximately 15 workers at TVR Machine LLC in Montgomery County and approximately 65 workers at Rol-Tech in Shelby County were eligible to apply for worker adjustment assistance through the U.S. Department of Labor. These resources will help ensure that displaced workers in Dayton and Fort Loramie have the financial support and training opportunities to get a fresh start.

Building Southwest Ohio Infrastructure and Transportation

Continuing to Develop Cincinnati's Riverfront

The ongoing revitalization of Cincinnati's riverfront has been a great addition for the city. In March, Sen. Brown announced that the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers has allocated federal funds to control erosion and prevent flooding of the Smale Riverfront Park at the Cincinnati Riverfront. The Smale Riverfront Park is the newest crown jewel in the Queen City, and it is important that the Army Corps will continue to fund this project to protect the park from erosion and flooding. With more and more people moving downtown and into the Banks development, the Cincinnati Riverfront Project is a clear example of how public/private partnerships can spur economic development.

Making Cincinnati's Airport Work Better for Ohioans

CVG Airport has played an important role in the growth of Cincinnati's economic development. With new carriers, more passengers, and an increase in freight operations, it's clear that Greater Cincinnati and Northern Kentucky are excellent places to live and do business. Following a series of articles in the Cincinnati Enquirer regarding controversies surrounding the Kenton County Airport Board, Sen. Brown called on Kentucky Governor Steve Beshear to revisit the composition of the Board so that Cincinnati-Northern Kentucky Airport (CVG) can best serve the Greater Cincinnati region in the highly-competitive commercial aviation market.

Although it is estimated that more than 60 percent of passengers departing from the airport are Ohio residents, Ohio representatives on the Airport's board do not have a vote on issues before the Board. Following news that the Kenton County Judge-executive named a top Ohio executive to the CVG Airport Executive Board, Sen. Brown applauded the announcement while reaffirming his call to Kentucky leaders to name Ohio residents to the airport's executive committee. According to a recent Cincinnati Enquirer article, Mike Schlotman – senior vice president and chief financial officer at Kroger – has been appointed to the airport board.

Sen. Brown applauded the August recommendations made by Kentucky Auditor Adam Edelen that would overhaul the CVG Airport Executive Board, ensuring Ohioans would have voting authority on issues facing the Airport.

“After nearly 70 years of a status-quo policy that has blocked-out the voice of Ohioans, it's time to shakeup the composition of the CVG Airport Executive Board to ensure the Greater Cincinnati/Northern Kentucky area is truly represented,” Sen. Brown said. “The recommendations by Kentucky Auditor Adam Edelen accomplish this and would help ensure

that CVG Airport remains competitive. By incorporating the voices of Ohio and Kentucky leaders, CVG will truly reflect the needs of the region. I urge members of the Kentucky General Assembly to support this plan and implement these recommendations immediately.”

Improving Service of Southwest Ohio Electric Cooperative

It can often be difficult for rural communities to fully fund critical infrastructure projects. New federal resources will allow for the construction of improved electric systems in Butler County. Sen. Brown announced that Butler Rural Electric Cooperative, Inc. will receive a loan from the United States Department of Agriculture’s (USDA) Rural Utilities Service – Electric Program (RUS – Electric Program). The funds will be used to make system improvements that will serve 180 customers, including upgrading 46 miles of electric line. \$264,000 of the loan is allotted for smart grid projects. Butler Rural Electric Cooperative, Inc. provides electricity to over 11,500 businesses and residences throughout Butler, Hamilton, Preble, and Montgomery Counties. These funds from the Agriculture Department will help ensure reliable electricity for the residents of Butler County.

Nominating Ohioan to Panel Tasked with Water Quality in Ohio River Basin

In May, Sen. Brown announced that President Obama has nominated an Ohioan to serve on the Ohio River Valley Water Sanitation Commission (ORSANCO). In a letter sent in November 2013, Sen. Brown recommended George A. Elmaraghy for the commission.

“Mr. Elmaraghy’s experience and unique skills would greatly benefit the ORSANCO board and the watersheds and communities of the Ohio River Valley,” Sen. Brown wrote in his recommendation letter to the president.

Improving Conservation Practices to Improve Ohio River Water Quality

In May, Sen. Brown, a senior member of the Senate Agriculture Committee, applauded an announcement by Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack that outlined the new Regional Conservation Partnership Program created by the 2014 Farm Bill. The new program classified the Ohio River as a priority watershed, eligible for new federal funding to help improve the water quality and natural resources in surrounding areas.

“USDA’s efforts to boost conservation efforts means added resources to help clean up the Ohio River,” Sen. Brown said. “By linking conservation programs that improve water quality, reduce run-off, and increase wildlife habitats, local stakeholders now have the tools necessary to improve and implement crucial conservation efforts. This program illustrates that conservation can benefit agriculture while creating jobs and improving eco-tourism in Ohio.”

New Resources to Redevelop Hamilton County Brownfield Sites

Ohio’s Brownfield sites can be opportunities for redevelopment and new growth. In May, Sen. Brown announced new federal funds to support environmental Brownfield site assessments in Hamilton County. The funds were awarded to the City of Norwood by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency’s (EPA) Fiscal Year 2014 Brownfields Assessment, Revolving Loan Fund, and Cleanup (ARC) program. These funds will help support cleanup and decontamination efforts critical to the safety and economic success of Norwood.

Calling for a Bipartisan Transportation Bill



Infrastructure investments helped attract the workers, business, and investments that made America a superpower. We built the best infrastructure in the world, but have watched it crumble for decades. That's why a long-term investment in our nation's infrastructure is vital to strengthening our nation's economic competitiveness and ensuring that thousands of hardworking Ohioans continue to rebuild our bridges and roads.

Montgomery County is home to 49 “structurally deficient” bridges, among the most in Ohio. Sen. Brown, in Dayton, called for a bipartisan approach to fixing America's highways and bridges by passing a long-term transportation bill.

New Resources to Improve Dayton Airport

In July, Sen. Brown was pleased to announce that James M. Cox Dayton International Airport has been awarded \$10,224,920 by the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) to rehabilitate Runway 06L/24R to preserve its structural integrity and to reduce the potential for foreign object debris.

“This is great news for Dayton,” Sen. Brown said. “These improvements will enhance safety at James M. Cox Dayton International Airport. These federal dollars will go a long way in sustaining travel in and out of the airport for area residents and businesses.”

New Resources to Improve Southwest Ohio Airports

Sen. Brown was pleased to announce that Middletown Regional Airport and Butler County Regional-Hogan Field Airport were awarded funds by the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) to conduct assessments and improvements. Funds will be used to improve terminal aprons.

Supporting Servicemembers, Veterans, and Law Enforcement

Constructing New Facilities at Springfield ANGB

Sen. Brown announced that the proposed appropriations bills that passed the House and Senate in January contains critical federal funding for the construction of a new intelligence operations facility at the Springfield Air National Guard Base (ANGB). “The construction of the new facility at the Springfield Air National Guard Base is a testament to the skills and dedication of our men and women in the Ohio National Guard,” said Sen. Brown. “These funds ensure that Ohio's world-class servicemembers have the resources they need to keep our nation safe.”

Warren County Student Appointed to U.S. Military Academy at West Point

In February, Sen. Brown announced that the U.S. Military Academy at West Point has extended an Offer of Appointment to Kings High School student Logan Leahy. Sen. Brown nominated the Maineville resident for the Military Academy at West Point. “Ohio schools are educating the young people who will become the next generation of military leaders. I am proud that Logan

has been offered the opportunity to attend one of our nation's most prestigious institutions," said Sen. Brown. "Mr. Leahy's family and the entire Maineville community should be proud of this dynamic young man, who embodies the integrity and courage needed to represent well and uphold the values of our nation."

Logan is a senior at Kings High School in Warren County, where he plays football and lacrosse. He is a class officer and member of the National Honor Society. Logan also helped establish a recreational basketball team at his school and is part of a saxophone quartet.

Each year, Sen. Brown nominates up to 10 students for each slot at our nation's service academies requiring congressional recommendations, including: the Air Force Academy; the Naval Academy; the Military Academy at West Point; and the Merchant Marine Academy. This year, because two openings were available at both the Air Force Academy and the Naval Academy, Sen. Brown nominated 20 students to those institutions. A nomination does not guarantee acceptance into a service academy. The Academy's Admissions Board ultimately decides who receives an appointment.

Supporting and Expanding Air Mission at Springfield ANGB



The men and women at the Springfield Air National Guard Base (ANGB) represent the best of the Ohio National Guard. Similar to any organization, it takes investment to retain and attract the best and the brightest.

In February, Sen. Brown met with Ohio Adjutant General Major Deborah Ashenurst to discuss upcoming priorities and long-term strategic planning for Ohio's National Guard. At the meeting, Sen. Brown expressed his support for continued air missions at Springfield ANGB. MG Ashenurst and her team at the Ohio Air National Guard understand the importance of retaining missions taking the appropriate actions to ensure that Ohio's National Guard is well suited for continued mission success.

Announcing a New Federal Marshal for Southern District of Ohio

Sen. Brown was pleased to announce that the Senate confirmed Peter C. Tobin to serve as U.S. Marshal for the Southern District of Ohio. U.S. Marshals are nominated by the President of the United States and must be confirmed by the U.S. Senate. Following Sen. Brown's recommendation of Tobin for the U.S. Marshal position, President Obama nominated him in August 2013.

Peter Tobin's wealth of experience and commitment to serving others has uniquely prepared him for this position. His diverse career in law enforcement spans more than four decades and makes him an ideal public servant. A veteran of the United States Army and Ohio Army National Guard, Tobin began his career at the Columbus Police Department where he was a patrolman before eventually earning command of its SWAT Team. He has served as Chief of Police for both the Powell, Ohio and London, Ohio police departments, and was the Narcotics Division Chief at the Ohio Bureau of Criminal Identification. Most recently, he served as the Bureau's Superintendent

Expanding Ohio Veterans' Home in Brown County

Our veterans deserve first-class facilities that match the first-class service they have provided to our country. Sen. Brown, a senior member of the Senate Veterans Affairs Committee, announced new federal resources to aid in the construction of additional multipurpose space and for improvements to the nurse call system, electrical system, doors, and floors at the Ohio Veterans Home in Georgetown. Constructed in 2003, the Georgetown Home offers nursing and hospice care for veterans. The Home also specializes in providing care to veterans with Alzheimer's disease. These new federal resources will help expand the usable square footage for veterans and their families at the Georgetown Home, while working to fulfill the promise made by our country to take care of those who have served us.

Ensuring Safety and Proper Protocol at the Dayton VA

Following a security breach at the Dayton VA, Sen. Brown, a senior member of the Senate Veterans Affairs Committee, sent a letter to U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) Secretary Eric Shinseki urging the Secretary take steps to address the potential shortage of experienced law enforcement officers within the VA system.

"Law enforcement officers put their lives on the line to protect our communities and families every day," Sen. Brown said. "So often when a tragedy occurs, we watch as police officers and other first responders run toward the scene while others flee. The recent security breach at the Dayton VA Medical Center serves as a reminder of the dedication of these individuals, and I urge the VA to revisit its policy of downgrading these positions."

Awarding Doolittle Tokyo Raider with Congressional Gold Medal

The bravery of the Doolittle Tokyo Raiders exemplifies our nation's highest ideals and values. Since 1776, Americans of all walks of life have been honored with the Congressional Gold Medal. Sen. Brown joined President Obama in May when he signed into law bipartisan legislation awarding the Congressional Gold Medal to the Doolittle Tokyo Raiders. Sen. Brown was the original author of the Senate-passed legislation and led the effort with Sen. John Boozman to obtain 78 bipartisan Senate cosponsors. Sen. Brown met with one of the four living Doolittle Raiders, Dayton native Lieutenant Colonel Richard Cole prior to the signing of the legislation.

Assisting Veterans with War-Related Injuries

When veterans seek claims for war-related injuries like post-traumatic stress and traumatic brain injury, the burden for establishing the connection should be on the Department of Defense, not on the veteran. With nearly 300,000 American veterans struggling with Post-Traumatic Stress (PTS) and another 25,000 veterans facing mild Traumatic Brain Injuries (mTBI), Sen. Brown, a senior member of the Senate Veterans Affairs Committee, was in Dayton to outline a new plan to help active duty servicemembers better track potential exposures during deployment that could be later connected to mental health injuries and mild TBI during deployments. Without proper documentation or a visible, physical injury, it is often difficult for veterans to establish a connection between injuries and military service. This lack of documentation can lead to improper medical care and increases in the disability claims backlog.

Currently, veterans who file compensation and disability claims, or seek medical care, must provide the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) with evidence that connects their claim to previous military service. In cases and conditions such as PTS and mTBI, veterans must provide either a written testimony from other servicemembers who witnessed the accident, provide relevant medical documentation that supports the claim, or possess military orders that prove the veteran was in a unit or location that supports the claim. These types of documentation however provide only a secondary account of the claim and may not fully illustrate the veteran's claim of service connected PTS and mild TBI.



Expanding Wright-Patterson's National Air and Space Intelligence Center

The National Air and Space Intelligence Center (NASIC) headquartered at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base is a premier defense intelligence agency with a historic legacy in Ohio. Sen. Brown was pleased to announce new federal funding to expand and strengthen operations at NASIC. As co-chairman of the Senate Air Force Caucus, Sen. Brown worked with key Senate leadership to secure funding that will be used to upgrade the facility. This new investment will further strengthen NASIC's capability to provide cutting-edge research on the next generation of foreign aerospace and weapon system capabilities. This new infusion of federal resources comes on top of the outstanding civilian and military personnel already working at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base.

Presenting Southwest Ohio with Overdue Service Medals

Ohio's current and former servicemembers have answered the call to action without delay throughout our nation's history.

Sen. Brown was pleased to present seven military service medals – including the Bronze Star and a Purple Heart that is more than 43 years overdue – to Vietnam veteran James Edward Bond. Bond served as a combat Army medic in Vietnam but the Army failed to award him a purple heart for injuries received in Vietnam. In a ceremony at the Talbert House, Sen. Brown presented Bond with replacement medals and the overdue Purple Heart.

Sen. Brown's office also presented overdue medals to Vietnam veterans and retired West Carrollton School District teacher Michael Whiteside. Sen. Brown's staff worked with the National Personnel Records Center and the U.S. Army to track down the long overdue medals that were never presented to Whiteside following his service in Vietnam.

New Resources for Southwest Ohio Firefighters

Firefighters put their lives on the line each day to keep our communities safe. It is important that Ohio's responders have the staff and equipment necessary to keep residents safe.

Sen. Brown was pleased to announce new federal resources awarded to fire departments in southwest Ohio for hiring by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security's Federal Emergency

Management Agency's Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response (SAFER) grant program. The Cincinnati Fire Department was awarded funds to hire firefighters. With so many communities already facing budget shortfalls, critical federal efforts like SAFER are pivotal in keeping our Ohio cities, towns, and villages safe.

Sen. Brown also announced new federal resources were awarded to the Dayton Fire Department, the Washington Township Fire Department, the Lockington Volunteer Fire Association in Piqua, the New Madison Community Volunteer Company in Darke County, and the German Township Fire & EMS in Springfield. The U.S. Department of Homeland Security's Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) awarded the funds through its Assistance to Firefighters program (AFG). These new federal resources will help ensure that Dayton has the skilled responders and updated resources they need to safely do their jobs.

New federal resources were awarded to fire departments in southwest Ohio for hiring by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security's Federal Emergency Management Agency Assistance to Firefighters grant program. The following departments received new federal resources to ensure that southwest Ohio's skilled responders have the updated resources they need to safely do their jobs:

- Adams County: Wayne Township Volunteer Fire Department
- Brown County: Village of Mt. Orab Fire Department
- Butler County: Ross Township Fire Department, Monroe Fire Department
- Clermont County: Goshen Township Fire and EMS, Union Township Fire Department
- Miami County: Lockington Volunteer Fire Association
- Clark County: City of Springfield Fire Rescue Division
- Darke County: Osgood Community Volunteer Fire Department
- Montgomery County: Sugarcreek Township Fire Department
- Hamilton County: St. Bernard Fire Department, Deer Park – Silverton Joint Fire District

Applauding Senate Confirmation of Secretary of Veterans Affairs



Our commitment to our veterans must match their commitment to our nation. Sen. Brown was pleased to announce the July confirmation of Robert “Bob” McDonald, a veteran of the U.S. Army and former CEO of Procter and Gamble, as the nominee for Secretary of the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA). In a 14-0 vote, the Senate Veterans’ Affairs Committee, of which Sen. Brown is a senior member, approved McDonald’s nomination. Later in July, the full Senate confirmed McDonald as Secretary of the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA).

Supporting Wright Patterson Expansion



Wright Patterson is the crown jewel of the Air Force. Sen. Brown – co-chair of the Senate Air Force Caucus – recently announced that Wright Patterson Air Force Base is one of four finalists being considered for the Air Force Installation and Mission Support Center (AFIMSC). AFIMSC would create 350 additional jobs at the base. In October, Sen. Brown joined members of the Ohio delegation in a letter to the Secretary of the Air Force Deborah Lee James urging the Air Force to locate the mission at Wright Patterson. Following that letter, Sen. Brown hosted Sen. Jack Reed, the second

most senior Democrat on the Armed Services Committee, for a visit to Wright-Patterson.

Fighting for Ohio Veterans

Sen. Brown recently announced federal funding to provide rental assistance and clinical services for homeless veterans in northeast Ohio as part of the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development-Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing (HUD-VASH) voucher program. This funding will provide rental for homeless veterans, while partnering them with a local Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) medical center.

“Veterans who serve their country in order to protect our freedoms should never face homelessness,” Sen. Brown said. “This rental assistance for homeless veterans is an important step in honoring the promise to support those who have already given so much to our nation.”

As the only Ohio senator to serve a full term on the Senate Veterans Affairs Committee, Sen. Brown continues to work to address issues facing Ohio veterans.



Protecting and Supporting Southwest Ohio Consumers

Urging NFL to Eliminate Blackout Policy

Despite the Federal Communications Commission (FCC)’s unanimous vote to eliminate the Sports Blackout Rule, a 1970s-era regulation that allows the NFL to black out broadcasts of a local sports game when the game does not meet a sellout threshold, the Cincinnati Bengals’ January playoff game may have been blacked out due to lack of ticket sales. At Sen. Brown’s urging, in 2013 the FCC released a petition calling for the agency to open the Sports Blackout Rule for public feedback, which is the first step in repealing the regulation.

“While the FCC’s recent unanimous vote to eliminate the Sports Blackout Rule is excellent news for fans and taxpayers across Ohio and across the country, the NFL should do everything it can to ensure that the Cincinnati Bengals Sunday’s playoff game is not blacked out,” Sen. Brown said. “This is unacceptable at a time when the price of attending games continues to rise and the

economy is not yet where it needs to be. Fans, through local taxes, often help pay for the stadiums. They should be able to cheer on their local teams, especially during the playoffs.”

Supporting Social Security, Medicare, and Healthcare

Protecting Southwest Seniors from Unfair Medicare Costs

When seniors are transferred from a hospital to a nursing home for further care, they should be able to focus on their recovery instead of technicalities that could lead to sky high medical bills. Sen. Brown visited Graceworks Lutheran Center in Centerville and Maple Knoll Village in Cincinnati to announce a plan that would end an arbitrary Medicare policy causing seniors to be unknowingly hit with large, unfair costs after receiving necessary post-acute medical care. Under current Medicare policy, a beneficiary must have an “inpatient” hospital stay of at least three days in order for Medicare to cover post-hospitalization skilled nursing care. Patients that receive hospital care on “observation status” do not qualify for this benefit, even if their hospital stay lasts longer than three days. Sen. Brown’s *Improving Access to Medicare Coverage Act* would help ensure that seniors receive the care they need without incurring unexpected and unfair costs.

Pushing for Health Tax Credit Important to Delphi, USW Retirees

Sen. Brown and Sen. Portman, both members of the Senate Committee on Finance, joined with Reps. Tim Ryan and Mike Turner to lead a letter signed by 28 lawmakers to Congressional leaders pushing for the Health Coverage Tax Credit (HCTC) to be extended, an issue of particular importance to retired United Steelworkers and Delphi salaried retirees struggling to maintain affordable healthcare. The letter calls for leaders of the Senate Finance Committee and House Ways and Means Committee to attach the HCTC to any bill reported out of these committees. The HCTC, which assists struggling Americans with their health bills, expired on January 1, 2014.

“Without the HCTC, which expired on January 1, 2014, these salaried retirees face financial hardship with up to 50 percent of their remaining pension going to fund their health care premiums,” the lawmakers wrote. “Given the importance of the HCTC to these American families who have already lost so much, we urge that an extension of this valuable program be included in any bill reported out of your respective committees.”

Alerting Miami Valley Residents of Local Resources Available to Help Enroll in New Health Insurance Marketplace

With the deadline for Ohioans to enroll for health care approaching, Sen. Brown joined the “Countdown to Get Covered” bus tour for a stop at the Wright State University in Dayton. Sen. Brown called attention to local resources available for southwest Ohio residents planning to purchase health insurance through the new health insurance marketplace. At the event, local navigators took appointments and walk-in meetings to help local citizens enroll in an affordable, high-quality health plan.

New Federal Funds for Community Health Center Development in Southwest Ohio

In April, Sen. Brown announced that HealthSource of Ohio, Inc., a non-for-profit primary care organization in southwest Ohio, received new resources from the Department of Health and

Human Services (HHS) to support and develop primary care health services. HealthSource of Ohio, Inc. serves Adams, Sen. Brown, Clermont, Clinton, Fayette, Hamilton, Highland, and Warren Counties.

“Community health centers play a vital role in helping Ohioans obtain access to primary and preventive health care services,” said Sen. Brown. “These new federal resources will help HealthSource of Ohio, Inc. provide affordable and accessible health care to more of southwest Ohio’s children, seniors, and parents.”

Welcoming Adams County Health Advocates to Washington D.C.

In May, Sen. Brown met with representatives from Adams County Health & Wellness Coalition (ACHWC) at his weekly coffee with constituents.

“It was an honor to meet with Adams County Health & Wellness Coalition,” Sen. Brown said. “Educating communities about the importance of nutrition and exercise helps prevent disease and ensures that families and their children are healthy.”

Improving Workplace Safety in Cincinnati

Investing in workplace safety and public health research is a fundamental responsibility of the federal government. During her first week as Secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), Sen. Brown wrote Secretary Sylvia Mathews Burwell urging HHS to prioritize funding for the construction of new facilities at the National Institute for Occupational Health and Safety (NIOSH) in Cincinnati. As part of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), NIOSH is responsible for conducting research and making recommendations to prevent work-related injury and illness. The NIOSH facilities in Cincinnati employ nearly 550 Ohio jobs. Sen. Brown toured NIOSH in February and saw first-hand the need for investment by HHS to upgrade facilities and research labs that support critical workplace safety and public health research.

Raising Awareness of Sudden Unexpected Infant Deaths



With Ohio ranking worst in the nation for African American infant mortality and 48th in the nation for overall births, Sen. Brown visited Cincinnati Children’s Hospital in August to announce landmark legislation to help doctors and researchers better understand the causes of stillbirths, Sudden Unexpected Infant Deaths (SUID), and Sudden Unexpected Deaths in Childhood (SUDC).

Joining Sen. Brown to announce the introduction of the *Sudden Unexpected Death Data Enhancement and Awareness Act* were two Cincinnati-area parents who lost children to Sudden Unexpected Infant Death and Michael Fisher, President of Cincinnati Children’s Hospital Medical Center and Dr. Louis Muglia, who will outline how the legislation will support local efforts to combat infant mortality.

Supporting Mental Health and Substance Abuse Treatment Services

Health centers play a vital role in helping Ohioans obtain access to primary and preventive health care services. Sen. Brown announced that the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) has awarded \$750,000 in funding through the health law to three southwestern Ohio health centers to help support and expand their mental health and substance abuse treatment services. This funding will enable the health center to hire additional mental health professionals, to better integrate mental health and substance abuse care programs into primary care models, and to increase the number of services available to patients.



Strengthening Southwest Ohio Neighborhoods: Keeping Ohio Families in Their Homes

Supporting Community Development in Clark and Butler Counties

Ohio is on the frontline of the foreclosure crisis. Foreclosures hurt the credit of American families, depress local property values, and weaken communities. Sen. Brown was pleased to announce a new neighborhood development grant for Neighborhood Housing Partnership of Greater Springfield in Clark County and Neighborhood Housing Services of Hamilton, Inc. in Butler County. Awarded by NeighborWorks® America, the grant will be used to promote and preserve affordable housing for residents of Clark and Butler Counties, and create or sustain jobs through local NeighborWorks-supported projects. Neighborhood Housing Partnership of Greater Springfield, Inc. and Neighborhood Housing Services of Hamilton, Inc. are two of eight recipients of the new neighborhood development grants across Ohio.

Working to Revitalize Southwest Ohio's Blighted Communities

Our local communities need more resources to address the scourge of blighted properties that undermine surrounding property values, drain local resources, and threaten the safety and security of our neighborhoods. Sen. Brown announced that Hardest Hit Funds (HHF) have been awarded to the Montgomery County Land Reutilization Corporation and the Port of Greater Cincinnati Development Authority to demolish vacant and abandoned properties. Part of the Neighborhood Initiative Program (NIP), these funds represent a portion of the \$570 million in Ohio HHF that Sen. Brown helped secure in 2010 as a member of the Senate Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs. These demolition funds are a critical step forward in rebuilding central Ohio neighborhoods devastated by the housing crisis. The Neighborhood Initiative Program will go a long way towards meeting that need and stabilizing local neighborhoods.

Urging Feds to Address Blighted, Dangerous Housing

Fannie Mae should review its procedures for selling foreclosed properties to ensure that all sales are in the best interest of the tenants and community and minimize losses to taxpayers. Sen. Brown recently sent a letter to Federal Housing Finance Agency (FHFA) Director Mel Watt over the management and sale of three Cincinnati-area multifamily property guaranteed through Fannie Mae. The properties fell into disrepair and contributed to neighborhood blight – causing

health and fire code violations. One property – located in the Price Hill neighborhood – has been cited by city and state officials for neglect and fell into such a state of disrepair that it was sold well below market value, undermining the ability of local buyers interested in rebuilding the community.

Federal Resources to Maintain Infrastructure in Brown County

It can often be difficult for rural communities to fully fund critical infrastructure projects like rental housing. Sen. Brown announced new federal resources that will provide for the construction of 43 units of affordable rental housing in Brown County. The Ashley Grove Senior Residence in Mt. Orab will receive a loan from the USDA Rural Development branch's Rural Rental Housing Guaranteed Loan program. According to the USDA, the Rural Rental Housing Guaranteed Loan Program was established to increase the supply of moderately-priced housing in rural areas. The 43 new units will be reserved for tenants making less than 50 or 60 percent of area median income.

Supporting Southwest Ohio's Agricultural and Rural Economy

Increasing Agriculture-Related Programing at Central State University



Sen. Brown and Rep. Marcia Fudge, senior members of the Senate and House Agriculture Committees and members of the Farm Bill Conference Committee, announced that Central State University in Wilberforce has been added to a distinguished list of Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) focused on expanding opportunities for agricultural research and education, commonly referred to as “1890 Universities”. This status allows Central State University to increase educational programming and partnership opportunities within Ohio's agriculture industry.

As one of the nation's oldest Historically Black Universities, it's fitting that Central State University has received the long overdue designation as an 1890 land-grant university. Due to the efforts of Sen. Brown and Rep. Marcia Fudge, Central State received the designation as an ‘1890 Institution’ during the 2014 Farm Bill process. ‘1890 Institutions’ were created as an extension of the Morrill Act of 1862 to create a network of historically black land-grant universities. During an October ceremony, U.S. Department of Agriculture Secretary Thomas Vilsack along with Sen. Brown and Rep. Fudge celebrated the designation at Central State. With this new status, Central state can expand educational programming related to agriculture and increase partnerships with Ohio's agriculture community.

“This designation is nearly 125 years in the making and long overdue. As one of the nation's oldest Historically Black Universities, Central State University can play an important role in promoting agriculture research and education through the country. Central State University's designation as an 1890 land-grant university means increased opportunities for partnerships with Ohio's agriculture industry and increased potential for its graduates to obtain jobs in Ohio's leading industry,” Sen. Brown said.

Darke County Educator Awarded Nation's Highest Honor for Teachers

In January, Sen. Brown was pleased to announce that a Darke County educator was awarded the 2012 Presidential Award for Excellence in Mathematics and Science Teaching. Elizabeth Pitzer, a fifth grade mathematics teacher at Arcanum-Butler Middle School, is one of two Ohio educators receiving the honor. The award is administered through the National Science Foundation, in partnership with the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy, and is the nation's highest honor for teachers in the mathematics and science field.

Alerting Ohioans of Severe Weather Recovery Assistance

In July, Sen. Brown announced that new federal resources were available for homeowners, renters, small business, and non-profit organizations that experienced physical damage due to severe weather between May 21 and May 22, 2014. Sen. Brown encouraged eligible residents to apply for assistance from the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) in advance of the August 4, 2014 deadline for federal physical damage disaster loans available to Champaign, Clark, Greene, Madison, Miami, and Montgomery Counties.

"Residents of Champaign, Clark, Greene, Madison, Miami, and Montgomery Counties can now apply for resources needed to recover from severe storms that swept through the area this year—which may have impacted their homes or businesses through no fault of their own," Sen. Brown said. "These loans will help Ohioans rebuild and get back on their feet."

New Federal Funds Announced for Agricultural Research and Development

Small businesses in Ohio are hubs for innovation, but they often require help raising the capital needed for research and development. Sen. Brown – a senior member of the Senate Agriculture Committee – announced the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA) has awarded Faraday Technology, Inc. in Clayton \$100,000 as part of its Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) program. NIFA's SBIR program provides small businesses with resources for agricultural research and development. Faraday Technology will use this funding to promote the health, diversity, and productivity of forest ecosystems. These federal resources will allow Faraday Technology, Inc. to make breakthroughs in agriculture research on strengthening our forest ecosystems.

Other Southwest Regional Highlights

New Federal Funds for Head Start Programs

In April, Sen. Brown new federal funds to support Head Start programs run by Adams Brown Community Action Partnerships, a social service agency in Georgetown; Miami Valley Child Development Centers, Inc., an agency in southwest Ohio offering literacy and school readiness programs for young children; Cincinnati-Hamilton County Community Action Agency, an organization in Cincinnati dedicated to serving low-income children, adults, and families; Butler County Educational Service Center, an agency in Hamilton that provides education programs for children and their families; and Celina City Schools. The funds were awarded by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and cover full-year programs, part-day programs, handicapped training, and technical assistance.

Sen. Brown announced in November \$6,302,675 in new federal funds to support Head Start and Early Head Start programs run by Council on Rural Services, a non-profit education organization serving Auglaize, Champaign, Darke, Greene, Logan, Miami, Preble, Shelby and Van Wert Counties.

“This is excellent news for southwest Ohio families and their children,” Sen. Brown said. “Head Start ensures that children have the skills they need to succeed in elementary school and beyond.”

Head Start is a federal program that provides children, until the age of 5, from low-income families with programming to prepare them for school. These programs, including health, nutrition, and social services, are designed to ensure their healthy cognitive, social, and emotional development.

Federal Funds for Service Programs in Cincinnati

AmeriCorps service members volunteer to help their neighbors, support local military families, and educate communities. Their critical work helps build stronger communities and uplift our fellow Ohioans. Sen. Brown announced that federal funds were awarded to Teach for America – Ohio by the Corporation for National and Community Service to support AmeriCorps service programs. This funding will allow for 180 more AmeriCorps volunteers to serve in Cincinnati. Teach for America – Ohio is a branch of Teach for America, an organization dedicated reducing education inequity by training volunteers to teach in low-income communities.

Recognizing Southwest Ohioans Selected as Finalists for National Service Award

Sen. Brown congratulated Xenia native Benjamin Tran and Dayton native Sean Young on being selected as finalists of the *2014 Samuel J. Heyman Service to America Medals (Sammies)*. The Ohio natives are competing in the National Security and International Affairs division for their work creating advanced improvised explosive device (IED) detecting sensors while working for the Air Force Research Laboratory at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base.

“Talented Ohioans like Mr. Tran and Mr. Young exemplify the ingenuity and drive that is fostered at Ohio’s military facilities,” Sen. Brown said. “Their dedicated work is vital to protecting our nation’s servicemembers.”

The new IED detecting sensors that Tran and Young developed have saved the lives of many American soldiers. In the first 15 months after their system was implemented by an Army division in Afghanistan, not one soldier in the unit was killed by an IED. Unlike previous sensors, these sensors are fully operational in cloudy weather, making conditions safer for soldiers on the ground.

Congratulating Edison Community College’s Class of 2014

In May, Sen. Brown joined students, parents, and faculty at Edison Community College’s 39th spring commencement ceremony, where he served as keynote speaker.

“Use your Edison education, your determination and grit, and make it your responsibility to ensure that Ohioans, no matter their zip code, can succeed,” said Sen. Brown. “As Edison

graduates, you are capable of many great things, and I know you will continue to astound us for years to come. Congratulations class of 2014. You have already made Ohio proud.”

Edison Community College was chartered in 1973 as the first state general and technical college in Ohio. The College was chartered as a two-year, public, coeducational, state-supported institution of higher learning offering studies in the arts and sciences, technical education, and adult continuing education. Since 1973, Edison has served more than 71,000 students and 9,796 graduates.

Welcoming Ohioans to Washington D.C.

In 2014, Sen. Brown welcomed Ohio students to intern in his Capitol Hill office. Students from Beavercreek, Springfield, and Oakwood served as legislative interns working alongside staff members to address constituent request and concerns. In Washington, D.C. a typical day could include speaking with constituents on the phone, greeting visitors to the office, organizing incoming correspondence, attending Senate committee hearings and briefings, and leading tours of the U.S. Capitol Building. West Chester native Mahtub Mochanloo interned for Sen. Brown during the 2014 summer.



In June, Sen. Brown welcomed Future Farmers of America (FFA) students groups from Edgewood Butler Tech FFA and Talawanda Butler Tech FFA at his weekly constituent coffee. The groups were in Washington, D.C. for the National FFA Organization’s Washington Leadership Conference.

In July, Sen. Brown met with Lieutenant Brendan Smith, a United States Naval Officer from Englewood, and Michael Fitzgerald, a Cincinnati native interning with the U.S. Congress Joint Economic Committee in Washington. Both attended Sen. Brown’s weekly coffee with constituents while visiting Washington, D.C. Sen. Brown also welcomed Jessica Waters of Beavercreek, a representative of The American Legion Auxiliary’s Girls Nation/Girls State.

Including John P. Parker House in the National Park System

In August, Sen. Brown and Rep. Joyce Beatty introduced legislation to begin the process of incorporating the John P. Parker House, an important stop on the Underground Railroad, into the National Park System. The Parker House is located in Ripley, Ohio.

“In addition to being a successful businessman, John P. Parker was a champion in the abolitionist movement,” Sen. Brown said. “As a former slave, he risked his life to help others secure their freedom. Adding this home into the National Park System as a national monument is an appropriate honor for this dedicated, selfless, and trailblazing American. John. P. Parker is an example of the best of Ohio.”

Antioch College Student Selected as White House Intern

Sen. Brown announced that the White House has selected Antioch College student Sara Goldstein as one of nearly 150 participants in the 2014 White House Internship Program.

“Ohio is home to strong schools, families, and communities that have helped to equip young people like Sara with the skills needed to lead,” Sen. Brown said. “Ms. Goldstein’s family and the entire Antioch College community should be proud of this driven young woman who embodies the integrity and intellectual insight needed to succeed in the White House.”

White House interns are exposed to a wide range of work that provides valuable professional experience.

Legislation and Issues

The following pages provide an overview of Sen. Brown's major legislative actions in 2014.

Jobs and the Economy

Sen. Brown had several important legislative victories in 2014. His manufacturing hubs legislation was signed into law; provisions of the *Strengthening Employment Clusters to Organize Regional Success* (SECTORS) Act were incorporated in the reauthorization of the *Workforce Investment Act*; and Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) was extended through FY15, instead of expiring at the end of the year. He also took the lead in the Oil Country Tubular Goods trade enforcement case and was named Co-Chair of the Steel and Auto Caucuses. Because of these and other successes, Sen. Brown remains the Senate's leading champion for working Americans on trade, workforce development, and manufacturing issues.

Supporting U.S. Manufacturing



Despite an environment of budget restrictions and Republican opposition to new government programs, Sen. Brown's bipartisan *Revitalizing American Manufacturing and Innovation (RAMI) Act* was signed into law on December 16, 2014 as part of the fiscal year 2015 omnibus appropriations bill. As a result of this success, the Department of Commerce will establish a National Network of Manufacturing Innovation to further invest in American research and production.

The White House announced several more manufacturing institutes, which now total six. The first hub is located in Youngstown. Ohio entities, such as The Ohio State University, General Electric (GE), Proctor & Gamble, Edison Welding Institute, and others are involved in half of these institutes. In addition, the University of Dayton is a major partner in the most recently awarded Institute for Advanced Composites for Manufacturing Innovation. Funding for additional institutes was included in the spending bill for the Department of Energy (DOE) and the Department of Defense (DOD).

America Makes – headquartered in Youngstown – continued its work on additive manufacturing with big and small companies. They awarded a small business in New Mexico a contract to increase 3D printing in the U.S. metalworking sector, and they sponsored a study at Case Western to investigate the ability of the toolmakers and die casters to use additive manufacturing to repurpose tool steel die casts. As a result of the institute and its regional work on additive manufacturing, GE announced a \$32 million investment in a new 3D printing research facility located near American Makes. The Institute is working to provide over 1,000 schools with access

to 3D printers and has launched a workforce training initiative that has helped more than 7,000 workers gain skills in additive manufacturing.

Building America's Middle Class

Raising the Minimum Wage

Sen. Brown continued to fight for American workers by advocating for an increased minimum wage and tipped minimum wage. Sen. Brown was an original cosponsor of the *Fair Minimum Wage Act of 2013* and was a lead advocate for the bill. In addition, he was the lead sponsor of a resolution designating February 13, 2014 as \$2.13 Day, to call attention to the extraordinarily low wages tipped workers make. Unfortunately, partisanship blocked the bill from getting to the president's desk, but Sen. Brown will renew his efforts to fight for an increase in the minimum wage and tipped minimum wage in 2015.

Helping Ohio Companies Find Skilled Workers

Ohio companies regularly mention the difficulty in hiring skilled workers to fill their positions. Sen. Brown introduced a bill in 2013 that would ensure industry's training needs are being incorporated into federal workforce training programs. His *Strengthening Employment Clusters to Organize Regional Success (SECTORS) Act* created a new program to develop sector-based workforce training and increase industry involvement in federal workforce training programs under the *Workforce Investment Act*. Provisions of his bill were incorporated into the *Workforce Investment and Opportunity Act* that passed last year. As a result of Sen. Brown's efforts, all state and local workforce investment boards are required to collaborate with industry in the development of workforce training, a big victory for Ohio manufacturers.

Fighting for Equal Pay

Women are paid just 78 cents for every dollar paid to men. Sen. Brown advocated for passage of the *Paycheck Fairness Act*, which would establish workplace protections for women and increase penalties for employers who discriminate in the payment of wages based on gender. Unfortunately, like the *Fair Minimum Wage Act*, this bill was blocked in the Senate. Sen. Brown's advocacy for women's equal pay will continue in 2015.

Paying Workers the Overtime They've Earned

Sen. Brown also worked to improve overtime laws for the millions of Americans who work more than 40 hours a week but are not compensated adequately. He was an original cosponsor of the *Restoring Overtime Pay for Working Americans Act*, which would raise salary thresholds that exempt employees from overtime pay. In addition, Sen. Brown urged the Administration to establish the overtime salary threshold to at least \$54,000 in any executive actions concerning overtime.

Protecting Workers from Unfair Scheduling Tactics

Workers often face schedules that make it hard for them to plan child care or work a second job. Sen. Brown was an original cosponsor of the *Schedules That Work Act*, which would give workers the right to request changes to their schedule and mandate that employers give advanced notice to workers what hours they will be required to work. Although this bill did not advance last year, Sen. Brown will continue to advocate for it in 2015.

Ensuring Coal Miners Receive Their Full Benefits

Jobs in energy industries, particularly coal mines, are dangerous and can have serious consequences for workers' health and safety. Sen. Brown was an original cosponsor of the *Black Lung Benefits Improvements Act*, which would make it easier for miners with Black Lung Disease to get the benefits they deserve. This bill responded to evidence that doctors who are paid by coal companies systematically misdiagnose miners with Black Lung to prevent the workers and their families from accessing their benefits. No progress was made on this bill last year, but Sen. Brown will continue to fight for its passage. Sen. Brown also strongly supported the Department of Labor (DOL) regulation on respirable coal mine dust, which would impose tougher standards on the amount of coal dust to which miners can be exposed, and urged DOL to defend it vigorously in against legal challenges from coal mining companies.

Providing Help to Workers Displaced by Foreign Trade

Sen. Brown continues to advocate for trade policy that prevents American jobs from being shipped overseas. Until our trade policy creates more jobs here at home than it ships offshore, it is important for workers to have the resources to acquire different skills and training to become more competitive. Trade Adjustment Assistance provides benefits for individuals who lose their job due to foreign trade, so they can enroll in training to improve their chances of gaining new employment. Although TAA cannot make up for the loss of the job in the first place, it is a critical lifeline between jobs. The TAA program was slated to expire completely on December 31, 2014. Sen. Brown gathered support from his Finance Committee Democrats and urged the Appropriations Committee to include an extension of the program before the end of the year. Because of his advocacy, the appropriations committee extended the TAA program through fiscal year 2015 and avoided a lapse in workers' benefits. In addition, Sen. Brown introduced a bill to reauthorize TAA and expand it to include public sector workers. He will advocate for the long-term reauthorization of TAA for workers in all sectors in 2015.

Supporting American Businesses and Workers

Strengthening Buy America Provisions

The U.S. federal government spends tens of billions of dollars on federal infrastructure projects each year, and Sen. Brown believes these taxpayer dollars should support the businesses and workers in communities across the country – not countries overseas. Using domestic content for infrastructure projects boosts domestic manufacturing and creates jobs in the United States, including Ohio. He introduced legislation, the *Invest in American Jobs Act*, to strengthen “Buy America” standards for all Department of Transportation (DOT) projects. In addition, his legislation closes loopholes to prevent companies from circumventing “Buy America” standards, and it improves transparency so that all waivers to “Buy America” are publicly noticed and reviewed before being issued by DOT. Sen. Brown successfully extended “Buy America” standards to the Drinking Water Revolving fund, a water infrastructure program, and he will continue to ensure domestic content requirements are applied consistently across all federal infrastructure funding. He will continue to push this legislation in advance of the 2015 surface transportation bill reauthorization.

Ensuring the Federal Government Purchases American Materials

Taxpayer dollars should support businesses and workers here at home, and Sen. Brown worked to improve federal procurement policy on textiles and apparel and American flags. Sen. Brown introduced the *Wear America Act*, which would require federal procurement of textiles and apparel to come from domestic sources, and the *All American Flag Act*, which would require the federal government to purchase American flags that are made in America. The *All American Flag Act* passed the Senate by unanimous consent. Federal procurement accounts for billions of dollars in spending each year, and Sen. Brown will continue to fight for it to purchase American-made goods.

Enforcing U.S. Trade Laws

Leading the Fight Against Korean OCTG Imports

American companies often face illegal trade practices by their global competitors, and it is critical that they have the tools necessary to fight back against these infractions. U.S. trade remedy laws that allow domestic stakeholders to bring anti-dumping and countervailing duty cases are key to leveling the playing field for American businesses and their workers. This year Sen. Brown led the charge against Korean illegal trade practices with oil country tubular goods (OCTG), steel pipe products used in oil and gas drilling. Korea has no domestic oil and gas industry, yet they have one of the world's largest steel industries. Korea's OCTG exports to the U.S. have increased significantly in recent years and are being sold at below-market prices. The domestic industry brought an antidumping case against Korean producers and those in eight other countries, and Sen. Brown led a group of 57 senators urging the Administration to assess dumping duties against the Korean producers. As a result of Sen. Brown's efforts, in July, the Commerce Department assessed duties between 9.89 percent and 15.75 percent on Korean OCTG products. These duties will help Ohio companies such as U.S. Steel, TMK Ipsco, Vallourec, and JMC Warren compete on a level playing field.

Standing up for the Domestic Rebar Industry

Domestic competitors in the rebar industry also faced unfair trade practices from foreign producers in Mexico and Turkey that were dumping and subsidizing rebar products and harming the U.S. rebar sector. Sen. Brown led a bipartisan group of 31 U.S. Senators urging the Commerce Department to investigate foreign producers and assess duties to prevent foreign producers from gaining an unfair competitive advantage over U.S. companies. Additional duties are now being levied on rebar imports from Mexico and Turkey. Although the additional tariffs are not as high as the American sector had pushed for, they will help Nucor and Byer Steel compete in Ohio.



Enforcing U.S. Trade Laws Across Industries

Sen. Brown fought for a level playing field for many other American industries in 2014. These include the aluminum extrusions industry, the domestic tire industry, welded line pipe producers,

the ferrovanadium sector, U.S. cement manufacturers, ferrosilicon producers, and the solar panel industry. Although not all of these cases were completed in 2014, Sen. Brown underscored his commitment to strong trade enforcement and a level playing field for U.S. companies.

Fighting Unfair Chinese Trade Practices

In 2014, the World Trade Organization (WTO) announced rulings in favor of the U.S. on rare earths and China's auto industry, two cases Sen. Brown urged the Administration to bring in 2013. As a result of his leadership, the Administration fought for U.S. businesses and workers and against China's unfair trade practices. He will continue to push the Administration to take action when China fails to play by the rules.

Stopping Currency Manipulation by Trading Partners

China's persistent undervaluation of their currency continues to hurt our companies and workers and is a drag on the U.S. economy. Other countries in the Asian region are forced to manipulate their currencies to compete with China, and our diplomatic efforts to address exchange rate manipulation have failed so far. American companies need the tools to fight back against foreign competitors who use currency undervaluation to gain an unfair advantage. Sen. Brown continued to advocate for his legislation, the *Currency Exchange Rate and Oversight Reform Act*. This legislation would allow stakeholders to bring a countervailing duty petition against producers who benefit from currency manipulation, among other things. Sen. Brown will resume the fight to get his bill passed and signed into law in 2015.

Leveling the Playing Field for Domestic Producers

In recent years, foreign producers have weakened the trade enforcement process through court challenges and taken advantage of loopholes in the law to avoid duties levied against unfair trade practices. The Great Recession also made it more difficult for U.S. companies to demonstrate that unfair trade practices were harming them, a requirement for a successful petition. As a result of the court cases, loopholes, and the economic downturn, it has been harder for American businesses to get the relief they deserve from the antidumping (AD) and countervailing duty (CVD) process.

After hearing from Ohio companies about the need to strengthen U.S. trade law, Sen. Brown introduced the *Leveling the Playing Field Act*. The bill restores the strength to the AD/CVD statutes by codifying existing Commerce practices and overturning erroneous court decisions that curtail the agency's authority. This legislation will make certain domestic industry can compete in the global marketplace by ensuring dumping and subsidization by and of foreign competitors are addressed by U.S. trade statutes. The bill was endorsed by the American Iron and Steel Institute, the Committee to Support U.S. Trade Law, and the Committee on Pipe and Tube Imports. Sen. Brown will push this bill to be included in any trade legislation that advances in 2015.

Fighting for a New Trade Policy in the Trans-Pacific Partnership

Sen. Brown continued to be a leading advocate for fair trade policy in 2014, focusing on the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP), an expansive trade agreement with 11 other countries. The

Administration has touted the TPP as a 21st Century agreement, but Sen. Brown is concerned that several key areas of the agreement will fall short.

Strengthening Currency Provisions

First and foremost, Sen. Brown has pushed for the inclusion of strong and enforceable currency disciplines in the trade agreement that will allow countries to bring cases under TPP if one country is using currency undervaluation to gain an unfair advantage. Several TPP countries, including Japan, Malaysia, and Singapore, have implemented monetary policy that undervalues their exchange rate, and the agreement must address this key issue. And, if China joins the TPP in the future, it will be even more important to have the tools in the agreement to crack down on China's currency manipulation.

Protecting Workers in the American Auto Industry



Because the agreement includes Canada and Mexico, Sen. Brown urged the United States Trade Representative (USTR) to include rules of origin for autos that is at least as strong as the rule of origin in NAFTA. The U.S. auto supply chain employs tens of thousands of Americans and is a major contributor to the economy. It is critical that TPP ensure the parties to the agreement, and not China, benefit from the agreement. It is also important that the agreement include the longest tariff phase-out of autos in the

agreement and that any tariff reductions occur at the end of that phase-out period to ensure the U.S. auto sector has adequate time to make adjustments before an onslaught of foreign-made cars floods the U.S. market.

Protecting U.S. Policy

Sen. Brown also has concerns about the ability of TPP's investment chapter to undermine existing and future U.S. policy. The investor-state dispute settlement (ISDS) mechanism allows investors to bring a case against a TPP country in an independent tribunal. Investors can challenge a domestic policy at the federal, state, or local level. If the arbitration panel agrees that the policy prevented or limited the returns on an investment, the government may be forced to reverse the policy and pay a large fine to the investor. Sen. Brown expressed these concerns in a letter to USTR this year asking that all government health programs, including Medicare, Medicaid, and 340B be carved out of the TPP agreement. Investor-state should not be used to challenge existing Medicare formularies or reimbursement policies --nor should it be used to prevent future Congresses from passing legislation giving the Secretary of Health and Human Services (HHS) the authority to negotiate drug prices with pharmaceutical companies. Sen. Brown will continue to push for reforms to investor-state and advocate for its exclusion from all future trade agreements.

Fighting Against Poorly Crafted Fast Track Legislation

The effects of U.S. trade policy are well-known in communities throughout Ohio that have seen their factories close and their jobs sent overseas. Like previous Administrations, the White House is pushing for trade promotion authority – or “fast track” authority – to prevent Congress

from amending any trade agreements before they vote on them. Sen. Brown has long opposed fast track because it undermines Congress' constitutional authority to shape U.S. trade policy. He is also concerned that the Administration has not adequately consulted with Congress on the TPP. Giving the White House fast track will only further prevent the House or Senate from having the opportunity to improve the trade agreement. Sen. Brown has made clear to his colleagues on the Senate Finance Committee and to the White House that fast track must be improved. He has also underscored the importance of including trade enforcement legislation, such as the currency manipulation bill and the *Leveling the Playing Field Act*, in any package of trade legislation. In 2015, Senator Brown will continue to advocate for TPP improvements, fast track reform, and a balanced U.S. trade policy.

Showing Principled Resolve Toward China

China is our second largest trading partner, behind only Canada, and the country with which the U.S. has the largest trade deficit. China joined the WTO in 2001. Over the last 14 years, the U.S. has seen countless factories close here and open up there. And instead of China's fulfillment of all of their WTO obligations, we have continued to see China play by the rules only when it suits them. As part of China's WTO agreement, in 2016 the Commerce Department will have to evaluate whether or not China is still a non-market economy. In addition, the U.S. is moving forward with negotiations on a Bilateral Investment Treaty with China. In light of ongoing trade negotiations and the upcoming 2016 date, Sen. Brown believes Congress needs to pay more attention to China. He gave a speech at the Council on Foreign Relations in December 2014 urging the Administration to adopt a policy of "principled resolve" toward China. Instead of accepting promises of future compliance or intermittent progress on key issues, the senator urged the White House to push for concrete improvements from China before any additional commitments are made with Beijing. Sen. Brown will continue to push for a balanced relationship with China.

Conclusion

Fighting for American workers and families is Sen. Brown's number one priority in Congress. U.S. manufacturing historically has been the key to the middle class, and Sen. Brown believes promoting U.S. manufacturing, fighting unfair trade practices, and supporting American workers is the key to U.S. competitiveness in the 21st Century. Sen. Brown looks forward to building off of 2014's accomplishments and achieving many more victories in 2015.

Agriculture & Rural Development

As Ohio's first senator to serve on the Senate Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition and Forestry in more than forty years, Sen. Brown is honored to represent our state's farmers and rural communities.

With one in 7 Ohio jobs connected to food and agriculture, Sen. Brown is fighting to keep Ohio agriculture strong. He is working for Ohio's family farmers by championing major reforms to the farm safety-net, new opportunities for direct marketing of local food, and better crop insurance policies.

2014 Farm Bill Overview & Update



With national attention tuned to the budget, debt, and deficit, the House and Senate Agriculture Committees were able to come together and pass a new, five-year Farm Bill on February 4, 2014 that will save taxpayer dollars and reduce the deficit by up to \$23 billion over the next ten years.

As differences were resolved between the differing House and Senate-passed bills, Sen. Brown was named a member of the Farm Bill conference committee—a process where House and Senate negotiators work out the differences between competing bills. In this role, Sen. Brown continued to advocate for a farm safety net that works for both Ohio corn and soybean farmers and taxpayers, policies that strengthen rural communities, and conservation programs that will lead to a cleaner Lake Erie.

Sen. Brown also used his role on the Agriculture Committee to right a historic wrong and ensure that Central State University (CSU) finally received its due as an 1892 Land Grant University. This designation, shared by other Historically Black Colleges and Universities, will ensure that CSU is able to devote research and teaching resources to important agricultural issues.

The Agricultural Act of 2014 was passed by the Senate with a vote of 68-32 and signed into law by President Obama in East Lansing, Michigan on February 7, 2014. Many amendments that Sen. Brown successfully offered to the Farm Bill during the 112th Congress were incorporated into the 2013 bill; and during the committee markup in 2013, Sen. Brown successfully had other amendments accepted and ultimately included in the final bill passed into law.

While work on the bill was contentious, Sen. Brown continually stated that he would be unable to support a bill that penalized Ohio corn and soybean farmers and hurt those reliant on food assistance programs during the economic downturn. Sen. Brown believes that the *Agricultural Act of 2014* successfully balanced the need to give farmers the certainty of a five-year bill, with important improvements that will protect taxpayers, farmers, and local communities. Sen. Brown

will continue to work with Ohio stakeholders and USDA to make sure implementation of new programs and policies goes as smoothly as possible.

Advancing Agriculture and Opportunities for Farmers

In advance of the Farm Bill, Sen. Brown spent time gathering input from Ohio farmers and citizens of rural communities on his *Grown in Ohio* listening tour and translating Ohioans voices into legislative proposals for the 2012 and 2013 Farm Bill. Making stops in Chesterland, Chillicothe, New Philadelphia, Custer, Cleveland, and Columbus, Sen. Brown met with farmers, entrepreneurs, and community leaders on topics from energy development in Appalachia and how to improve farmers' risk management tools, to increasing production and consumption of locally grown food. Sen. Brown spent 2013 and 2014 fighting to make Ohioan's priorities into policy—and to pass that policy into law.

The Farm Bill passed by Congress represents the most significant reform in agriculture policy in decades. Specifically, the bill:

- **Eliminates Direct Payments to Farmers:**
Direct Payments and two other farm subsidy programs are repealed, creating \$15 billion in savings for deficit reduction. Direct Payments are made to farmers regardless of losses or even if a crop is planted.
- **Limit Farm Payments to Non-Farmers**
This bill directs the Secretary to close the “management loophole” and ensures that benefits only go to actual farmers by tightening USDA's definition of an actively engaged farmer.
- **Tightens Payment Limits**
The bill reduces the amount any single person can receive in farm payments per year to \$125,000.
- **Ends Farm Payments to Millionaires**
Strict new limits prevent any person with an adjusted gross income of more than \$900,000 from receiving farm program payments.

At *Grown in Ohio* listening sessions, Ohioans stressed the need to improve farm safety net programs so they are simple and efficient, providing farmers with support only when they need it most. Specifically, many Ohio farmers said that with volatile prices and rising input costs, a revenue-oriented program like the Average Crop Revenue Election (ACRE) program, which Sen. Brown crafted and successfully included in the 2008 Farm Bill, would be a better tool for managing that risk than the traditional suite of farm programs.

In response, Sen. Brown worked closely with Ohio farmers to develop a policy proposal that provides farmers the risk management tools they need while maintaining participants' reliance on private crop insurance. The product of this collaboration was the **Aggregate Risk and Revenue Management (ARRM)**, which Sen. Brown introduced with Sen. John Thune.

Saving nearly \$20 billion in taxpayer dollars, ARRM eliminates three existing farm programs and overhauls the ACRE program to make it more simple, efficient, and responsive by determining losses more locally than at current state levels; reducing overlap with crop insurance; and improving the application and administrative processes. ARRM quickly became the foundation for Agriculture Committee discussions about the future of farm programs and, to date, remains the only concrete, bipartisan proposal for farm program reform with significant savings to taxpayers and support from the farm and non-farm communities alike. In 2012, ARRM became the foundation for negotiations over what shape a streamlined farm safety net should take and was ultimately included in the Senate Farm Bill in modified form as the **Ag Risk Coverage (ARC) program**.



Under the **Ag Risk Coverage (ARC) program included in the bill**, Farmers will gain access to a single, risk-based coverage program that complements crop insurance to protect against both price and yield losses. Farmers will make a one-time choice between coverage at the individual farm level or at the county-level. Payments to farmers will be available only when actual losses are experienced off of a benchmark revenue calculated using an Olympic average of the previous five crop years. Payment rates depend on whether the farmer has elected the individual farm level coverage or county-level coverage. Farmers can only receive payments for acres that are actually planted, and only when there is a drop in price or yields. In order to be eligible for ARC, all farmers must agree to comply with conservation and wetlands requirements.

Disaster Assistance and Risk Management

At *Grown in Ohio* listening sessions, Ohio farmers repeatedly stressed the need for reliable crop insurance products that work for all types and sizes of farms. And, because Ohio farmers consistently stress that crop insurance is their most important risk mitigation tool, a long standing priority of Sen. Brown is to make sure crop insurance is affordable and a good investment for American taxpayers. These farmers told Sen. Brown that they didn't need, and didn't want direct payments.

Extreme weather events in 2012 underscored the critical need for the disaster assistance and risk management tools included in the Farm Bill. With more than 80 percent of the country facing abnormally dry and drought conditions, farmers were faced with risks unlike those found in any other profession. A few days of bad weather or volatile market conditions can threaten the livelihood of America's farmers, ranchers, and rural small business owners. Responding to the concerns of farmers across America, the *Agricultural Act of 2014* strengthens and improves coverage for all commodities and underserved crops like fruit and vegetables without making budget cuts to the crop insurance title; it also strengthens and improves risk management tools and supports farmers and small business owners who have suffered disasters beyond their control. Specifically, the bill does the following to help farmers manage risk and respond to disaster:

- **Creates the Supplemental Coverage Option**
The Supplemental Coverage Option allows producers to purchase additional coverage on an area yield and loss basis. The coverage option establishes a trigger on coverage offered only if losses exceed 21 percent for producers enrolled in ARC and 10 percent for all others.
- **Expands Crop Insurance for Fruit and Vegetable Producers**
Crop insurance coverage is expanded for underserved crops and regions, including fruit and vegetable producers. The bill provides additional assistance for underserved producers to partner with private developers of crop insurance to create improved insurance products. The bill also allows the Risk Management Agency (RMA) to conduct research and development on new or improved crop insurance products. It also creates a new partnership to expand access of index-based weather insurance products for fruit and vegetable growers who don't have sufficient price or yield data for traditional insurance.
- **Improves Crop Insurance for Beginning Farmers and Ranchers**
Beginning farmers and ranchers are given a 10 percentage point discount for all crop insurance premiums. The bill also provides beginning farmers and ranchers with an improved production history when they have previous farming experience or when they face natural disasters.
- **Strengthens and Reinstates Livestock Disaster Programs for 2013**
The livestock disaster provisions originally enacted in the 2008 Farm Bill expired in 2011, leaving producers without disaster assistance for the current crop year. Livestock disaster programs are critical as farmers and ranchers experience losses in livestock and grazing land due to extreme heat, drought, and fire. The 2013 Farm Bill provides permanent funding and authority for the Livestock Disaster Programs, including: the Livestock Indemnity Program (LIP), the Emergency Livestock Assistance Program (ELAP), and the Livestock Forage Disaster Program (LFP), which was enhanced by increasing payment rates and streamlining assistance. Ohio livestock producers specifically benefitted from this program.
- **Supports Specialty Crop Growers without Crop Insurance**
The 2014 Farm Bill will allow producers without access to crop insurance to purchase 65 percent "buy-up" coverage for losses under the Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP). Producers who elect higher coverage levels would pay a nominal premium based on the value of their production and acres planted and could receive up to \$100,000 to cover their losses. Beginning farmers would receive a discount on fees paid for the new NAP buy-up coverage. This coverage is made retroactive for fruit producers who faced losses due to frosts and freezes in 2012. This new program is particularly beneficial to Ohio's grape growers in northeast Ohio.
- **Continues and Makes Retroactive the Tree Assistance Program**

The 2014 Farm Bill retroactively extends the Tree Assistance Program (TAP) and provides it with permanent authority and funding going forward. TAP will be available to all producers who purchased either crop insurance or NAP, and will pay producers the cost of replacing or rehabilitating fruit trees, grape vines, or fruit bushes that are lost to natural disasters.

Building New Markets for American Agriculture

Despite economic challenges nationwide, the farm economy has remained strong as U.S. production capacity continues to increase and agricultural exports are at record levels. Identifying new markets for American agricultural products and new revenue streams for farmers is essential to continuing this record of success. From renewable energy to export markets and local foods, Sen. Brown has been working to expand opportunities for all Ohio farmers.

Farm-Based Renewable Energy

With higher energy costs, our country needs a bold and innovative approach to reducing our dependence on foreign oil and dramatically reducing pollution. Ohio farmers and rural communities are integral to building, growing, and implementing the fuels and technologies that will power the clean energy economy—and it's a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity for farmers to diversify, secure new markets, and create new revenue streams. Sen. Brown has been a consistent champion for development of farm-based renewable energy and the Farm Bill energy programs created in the 2002 and 2008 Farm Bills have been important drivers of innovation and adoption of new technologies.

Sen. Brown put significant time and focus into building a bipartisan coalition of Agriculture Committee members who were committed to reauthorizing and funding key Farm Bill energy programs into the future.



Included in the Farm Bill is new mandatory funding for energy programs, like the Rural Energy for America Program (REAP), that will promote homegrown energy and make rural America more energy efficient.

Developing a Biobased Products Industry

The emerging biobased industry links two of Ohio's strongest sectors, agriculture and manufacturing, to make new products from soy-based greases and ink and toner to car seats and plastic substitutes. Interest in the biobased products industry gathered steam in 2011 when, at Sen. Brown's invitation, Denny Hall, the assistant director of the Ohio BioProducts Innovation Center (OBIC) and a sixth generation farmer testified before the Senate Agriculture Committee. Following this hearing, Secretary of Agriculture Tom Vilsack visited OSU to learn how the biobased product industry is creating jobs, and Sen. Brown held a *Grown in Ohio*

listening session focused on the challenges Ohio biobased companies face as they get started and grow.

In 2012, Sen. Brown and Agriculture Committee Chairwoman Debbie Stabenow, along with six colleagues, introduced their “**Grow it Here; Make it Here**” **Biobased Manufacturing Initiative** to help create jobs and boost the biobased products industry.

Sec. Vilsack and Sen. Brown made several visits to Ohio manufacturers during consideration of the Farm Bill to highlight the new jobs and potential that could come from linking two of Ohio’s most important industries—manufacturing and agriculture.

The components of the initiative were included in the *Agricultural Act of 2014*.

- **Strengthens the Biopreferred Program** which certifies and labels products so consumers can choose to purchase goods made of agriculture materials, and provides a preference for these products for government purchases. The initiative also calls for greater accountability in the initiative, including auditing and compliance activities to ensure the integrity of the certified label. USDA's Biopreferred Program offers over 8,900 bio-based products.
- **Spurs the commercialization of new agricultural innovations** by streamlining and focusing resources to help new biobased projects move from the development to the commercialization phase, also known as the "valley of death" since far too many good ideas do not make it out of this phase. The initiative focuses the USDA's Biomass Research and Development Initiative on the commercialization of biobased products-bridging this gap to help accelerate the biobased industry.
- **Increases access to capital for bio-based manufacturers** by expanding the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Biorefinery Loan Guarantee Program, so biobased manufacturers have access to loans to help finance new operations or expand existing ones.

Providing Outdoor Opportunities and Protecting Natural Resources

Our nation’s land and water conservation programs provide state and local governments with the tools and resources to create parks and recreation areas, and preserve these precious natural resources. Sen. Brown remains committed to preserving native wildlife and habitats and safeguarding our lands and waters for future generations.

The 2014 Farm Bill will strengthen efforts to protect critical wildlife habitats. Healthy habitats and clean waters are not only good for our environment, but they also support hunting, fishing, and bird watching which benefit rural economies and creates jobs.

Regional Conservation Partnerships Program Creates New Opportunities for Partners

The bill significantly expands opportunities for conservation organizations and local communities to partner with farmers to maintain watersheds and wildlife habitats. Specifically,

four existing programs are consolidated into one that will support projects that improve soil quality, water quality, or wildlife habitat in a specific area or region. Projects are selected through a competitive, merit-based process, and producers are encouraged to leverage partner resources to achieve common goals. In Ohio, this program will prove important for leveraging resources and continued support for water-quality improvement efforts in Lake Erie and Grand Lake Saint Marys.

Improving Water Quality in Lake Erie



A clean and healthy Lake Erie benefits all Ohioans. Recent studies have shown that greater investment in the Great Lakes would have a benefit of over \$50 billion on the economies of the eight lake states. However, the Western Lake Erie Basin has been experiencing growing algal blooms. That is why, beginning in 2011, Sen. Brown has been working with Sec. Vilsack and USDA's Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) and calling for increased attention to conservation efforts in

the surrounding watersheds. He also invited NRCS Chief Jason Weller to visit the Lake and see firsthand the challenges facing this critical watershed.

In December 2011, then NRCS Chief Dave White did just that and brought with him a team of the nation's top scientists from USDA and Purdue University to learn from the Ohioans who are working on Lake Erie every day. The scientists then developed a set of recommended measures farmers can take to help limit phosphorus losses from agricultural operations that the USDA is now implementing in Ohio and throughout the region.

As a result of Chief White's visit and the scientists' recommendations, in June 2012, Sen. Brown, along with Sec. Vilsack, and Agriculture Committee Chairwoman Stabenow, announced \$2 million in financial assistance through the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) to help farmers in designated parts of Michigan, Ohio, and Indiana prevent phosphorus from entering Western Lake Erie Basin waterways.

In light of the August 2014 drinking water scare, Sen. Brown worked with USDA to provide an additional \$2 million in EQIP funds to increase cover crops in the Western Lake Erie Basin. Sen. Brown has also been an advocate for a tri-state proposal (Ohio, Indiana, Michigan) for the newly created Regional Conservation Partnership Program.

Public Access to Private Land

The bill continues to encourage private landowners to allow public access to their land for recreational uses such as hunting, fishing, and bird watching.

Greater Focus on Wildlife Habitats

The bill strengthens the Environmental Quality Incentives Program to increase support for wildlife habitats on working lands. At least five percent of the program funding is directed to projects that support wildlife habitats, and wildlife considerations can be included in the application selection process.

Conservation Reserve Program Continues to Support Habitat

The Conservation Reserve Program is designed to prevent soil erosion and improve water quality. The bill establishes a new, 1.5-million acre grasslands enrollment option to encourage farmers to conserve critical grasslands. It also protects options for farmers and foresters to develop wildlife habitats on their land.

Conservation Stewardship Program and Locally Identified Resource Concerns

The bill increases flexibility for wildlife habitat priorities to be included in the Conservation Stewardship Program, creating additional opportunities for conservation activities that benefit wildlife species.

Easement Program Protects Wetlands and Valuable Grasslands

The bill streamlines and consolidates programs to create an easement program with mandatory funding to protect wetlands as well as farmlands or grasslands that are threatened by suburban sprawl. The bill protects access to wetland easements for hunting, fishing, and other outdoor activities.

Nationwide Sod saver Provision to Preserve Critical Grassland Habitats

Saving the integrity of unused, native soils is an important step in the preservation of the Ohio landscape and grasslands which are prime wildlife habitats that support healthier wildlife populations.

Sen. Brown's bipartisan agriculture safety net proposal the *Aggregate Risk and Revenue Management Act* also included an important proposal that would save native sod. "Sod saver" rules would make land previously not used for crop production ineligible for commodity support programs – encouraging farmers to not put this native soil into the rigors of farming. The bill includes a similar nationwide provision to encourage farmers to protect critical grassland and prairie habitats and not convert that land to agricultural production.

Bolstering Production and Consumption of Ohio-Grown Foods

Local and regional agriculture is a major economic driver in the rural economy. There are now more than 7,000 farmers markets and direct-to-consumer sales have accounted for more than \$1.2 billion in annual revenues nationwide. By supporting our state's family farms, we can expand farming businesses, create rural jobs, and invest in local and regional food economies.

For each dollar that consumers spend on food, less than \$0.16 goes back to the farmer. Supporting opportunities for farmers to sell their products directly to consumers or through shorter local supply chains means that more of a consumer's dollar stays – in Ohio – primarily on the farm, where it is invested in local jobs and supplies and helps the local economy. A



recent study shows that if northeast Ohio's residents and businesses spent 25 percent of their food dollars on local farms and businesses, 27,500 new jobs could be created while increasing economic output by \$4.2 billion and generating \$126 million in local and state taxes.

That is why in the 113th Congress Sen. Brown introduced The *Local Farms, Food, and Jobs Act*. This legislation, which was largely included in the Farm Bill, is a comprehensive package of reforms that will help Ohio farmers and ranchers by addressing production, aggregation, marketing, and distribution needs. The newly strengthened programs will encourage consumer access to healthy, fresh food with support for technology and direct sales.

Key provisions of the *Local Farms, Food, and Jobs Act* were included in the *Agricultural Act of 2014*:

- **Expansion of Opportunities for Local and Regional Food Systems**
The bill strengthens support for farmers markets and expands authority to support innovative local food enterprises like food hubs. The bill also supports local food projects like urban greenhouses, community gardens, and community-based nutrition education for low-income families that help address community food security and support local economies.
- **Increase in Access and Affordability of Healthy Food Options**
In both urban and rural low-income communities, many people lack reasonable access to nutritious and affordable food. The bill authorizes the Healthy Food Financing Initiative to administer loans and grants to improve access to healthy foods in these "food deserts." The bill also expands access to healthy options with initiatives that give low-income individuals incentives for purchasing fresh fruits and vegetables and by allowing Community Supported Agriculture operations to be authorized to accept Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits.
- **Promotion of Better Health for School Children**
The bill continues the successful Fresh Fruit and Vegetables Program, which provides fresh fruits and vegetables to elementary school children throughout the school day in school districts with a high proportion of low-income students. It also continues the Department of Defense Fresh Program, which distributes fruits and vegetables to schools and service institutions, and continues to allow the Agriculture Marketing Service to conduct pilots to allow states to source locally grown produce.

Creating Opportunities for Beginning Farmers

With the average age of farmers at 57, one of the most pressing challenges in agriculture is preparing the next generation of farmers and ranchers to meet the increasing world demand for food. Making sure agriculture is profitable is an essential component of recruiting and retaining a new generation of farmers and ranchers.

Because Sen. Brown puts high priority on helping beginning farmers and ranchers start, continue, and build family farming and ranching operations, he cosponsored the *Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act* which extends, improves, and strengthens USDA's work to help beginning farmers obtain education and training, necessary financial resources and credit, assistance for practicing sound conservation in their operations, and adequate income insurance and risk management.

Additionally, to advance the interests of beginning farmers, the Senate's Farm Bill:

- **Continues Support for Beginning Farmers**
The bill continues the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Development Program, which develops and offers education, training, outreach, and mentoring programs to ensure the success of the next generation of farmers. The bill expands eligibility to include military veterans who wish to begin a career in agriculture.
- **Prioritizes Beginning Farmers across USDA Programs**
The Department of Agriculture is required to prioritize beginning farmers to ensure that they have access to USDA programs, including the Biomass Crop Assistance Program and Rural Cooperation Development Grants. Five percent set-asides in the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) and the Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP) make sure that beginning farmers and ranchers have fair and equitable access to conservation programs.
- **Increases Access to Capital**
The bill makes significant strides in increasing lending to beginning farmers by expanding eligibility, removing term limits on guaranteed lending, and providing opportunities for beginning farmers to earn direct loan access. For the first time, the USDA will have the ability to create pilot programs in the Farm Loan Programs exclusively targeted to beginning farmers. This provision is based on S.368, a bipartisan bill to eliminate term limits on FSA loan programs that Sen. Brown cosponsored in February 2011.
- **Provides Better Access to Crop Insurance**
This bill provides nearly \$200 million in new funding for expanded access for crop insurance for beginning farmers. These improvements will lower the cost of crop insurance for beginning farmers, allow the Risk Management Agency to consider a beginning farmer's previous experience in calculating their production history, and it will provide additional assistance when beginning farmers face natural disasters.

- **Encourages Older Farmers to Help Beginning Farmers Through Conservation**

The bill reauthorizes the Conservation Reserve Program Transition Incentive Program, which gives two extra years of Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) payments to retiring farmers who transition their expiring CRP land to beginning farmers. This program has seen great success with retiring farmers who want to help the next generation get started in agriculture.

- **Helps Beginning Farmers Buy Land**

The bill reauthorizes the Contract Land Sales Program, which guarantees loans to retiring farmers who sell their land to beginning or socially disadvantaged farmers. The bill also sets aside a significant percentage of loans for beginning farmers, including additional benefits in the down payment loan program, conservation loans, and direct lending programs for farm ownership and operations.

- **Helps Beginning Farmers Get Started**

The bill continues the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Individual Development Accounts, which are designed to help new farmers finance their agricultural pursuits. This program funds financial and business education, as well as matched saving accounts, and encourages healthy business practices and savings.

Supporting Agricultural Research

Modern agriculture is faced with multiple challenges. By 2050, agricultural production must double in order to feed the global population. Furthermore, investment in agricultural research has been the foundation for our country's agricultural success. That is why Sen. Brown maintains a steady drumbeat of support for agricultural research.

Sen. Brown has supported the *Charitable Agricultural Research Act*, which creates agricultural research organizations to facilitate private sector contributions to agricultural research and was included in the *Agriculture Reform, Food and Jobs Act of 2013*. He also co-sponsored the bipartisan bill, *Veterinary Services Improvement Act*, which was included in the Senate 2012 Farm Bill, to address the shortage of veterinarians in rural agricultural areas by supporting veterinary education and rural recruitment. Additional provisions supporting agricultural research in the bill include:

- **A Foundation for Food and Agriculture Research**

The bill creates a new non-profit foundation, the Foundation for Food and Agriculture Research, to leverage private funding, matched with federal dollars, to support agricultural research. This approach will foster continued innovation in agricultural research.

- **The Continuation of Critical Agricultural Research**

The Agriculture and Food Research Initiative (AFRI) program provides competitive grants for basic and applied research. The bill does not include policy changes, but it does reauthorize the program that enables all Ohio universities and

faculty to submit and compete for funds to conduct research on issues of relevance to the Ohio communities each university serves.

- **University Research**

The bill reauthorizes agricultural research activities at 1862, 1890 and 1994 Land Grant institutions. In Ohio, this means that agricultural, food, nutrition and natural resources research happening at The Ohio State University and its satellite campuses at the Ohio Agriculture Research and Development Center (OARDC) and the South Centers in Piketon will continue.

- **Extension Service**

The bill reauthorizes funds for extension service activities. Each state has an extension service run through the Land Grant University; in Ohio this is The Ohio State University. OSU-Extension has staff in every county of Ohio where they provide technical support and expertise on issues ranging from consumer science and nutrition to agronomy and pest control.

- **Continuation Specialty Crop Research**

Provides mandatory funding over 10 years for the Specialty Crop Research Initiative, ensuring funding will be available for key research projects for fruits, vegetables and other specialty crops. This funding also ensures funding will be available for this program in the next Farm Bill.

Building Strong, Vibrant Rural Communities

Strong rural communities are essential to Ohio's economic prosperity and serve as a barometer for our economy's health. By closing the skills gap, rebuilding our infrastructure, and expanding agriculture's role in the clean energy economy, we can strengthen rural Ohio's competitiveness in the 21st century.

Creating Jobs and Economic Prosperity in Rural Ohio and the 2014 Farm Bill

More than half of Ohio's 88 counties are designated as "rural" by the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Sen. Brown recognizes that rural America faces great challenges in a fragile economy. That's why Sen. Brown is working—in agriculture, clean energy, aerospace, manufacturing, entrepreneurship and more—to connect Ohio's strengths, rebalance the economy, replace the hundreds of thousands of Ohio jobs that have been lost, and rebuild our middle class.

Today, one out of every 12 jobs in the American economy is connected in some way to what happens in rural America, and Sen. Brown is fighting to make sure that job opportunities in rural America increase. In 2014, much of Sen. Brown's attention has turned to how the Farm Bill can be a mobilizing force and tool for investment and job creation in rural communities.

As the lead federal agency for rural economic development, how the U.S. Department of Agriculture approaches its work in rural America matters. And, while most rural development programs are funded via annual appropriations processes, it is during the Farm Bill that Congress has the chance to re-evaluate and fine-tune USDA's day-to-day work in rural America.

Sen. Brown knows that in order for rural America to compete in the global economy and offer the quality of life necessary to attract and retain residents and businesses, expansion of broadband service is essential. That's why, in the 112th Congress he introduced the *Connecting Rural America Act* to reauthorize the USDA's Broadband Loan Program through 2017. Sen. Brown is also working to modify the program so it better serves communities that are small in size, remotely located, high poverty, and projects that are supported by a combination of local stakeholders. The bill was included in the Farm Bill.

A summary of the rural economic development provisions of the *Agricultural Act of 2014* follows:

Rural Business Development

- **Continues Support for Rural Business Development**
The Rural Business Development Grants program will award competitive grants to public agencies and non-profit community development organizations for business development, planning, technical assistance, or job training in rural areas.
- **Supports Rural Cooperative Development**
The Rural Cooperative Development Grants program provides competitive grants to non-profit organizations for the establishment and operation of centers for rural cooperative development.
- **Encourages Rural Entrepreneurship**
The Rural Microenterprise Assistance Program awards grants to microenterprise development organizations to provide training, business planning assistance, market development assistance, and other services to rural microenterprises. This program also awards funding for the establishment of rural microloan programs designed to support microentrepreneurs in rural areas.
- **Supports Rural Food Processing**
The Value-Added Agricultural Market Development Program Grants program is designed to encourage independent producers of agricultural commodities to process their raw products into marketable goods, thereby increasing farm income. Grants may be used for planning activities, for working capital for marketing value-added agricultural products, and for farm-based renewable energy. The program will prioritize funding for projects benefiting beginning farmers and ranchers. Sen. Brown's amendment successfully provided five years of mandatory funding for this program in the Farm Bill.

Infrastructure Improvement

- **Access to Broadband Services in Rural Areas**
Through USDA's Broadband Program, the Department provides funds for the construction, improvement, and acquisition of facilities and equipment needed to provide broadband service in rural communities. The bill authorizes USDA to begin

providing combinations of grants and loans for the expansion of broadband service. The program will target funds to rural communities isolated from significant population centers.

- **Distance Learning and Telemedicine**
This program provides competitive grant and loan funding that supports equipment and infrastructure improvements that enhance telecommunications capabilities at educational and medical facilities.
- **Water, Waste Disposal and Wastewater Facility Grants and Loans**
This program provides grants, loans, and loan guarantees to public agencies for projects that support the development, storage, treatment, purification, or distribution of water or the collection, treatment, or disposal of waste in rural areas. Rural communities with populations of less than 5,500 are prioritized for funding.
- **Rural Water and Wastewater Circuit Rider Program**
This program provides competitive grants to non-profit organizations that give technical assistance to rural public water systems. This technical assistance helps the water systems to comply with state and federal environmental regulations. The program is authorized to receive \$25 million annually.
- **Continues Business Loan Support**
The Business and Industry Direct and Guaranteed Loan Program improves, develops, or finances business, industry, and employment in rural communities by bolstering the existing private credit structure through the guarantee of quality loans. The bill reserves funds made available through the program for projects that include the processing, distribution, storage, and marketing of locally produced agricultural food products.
- **Rural Energy Savings Program**
The bill authorizes a new loan program, administered by the Department of Agriculture, which will issue zero-interest loans to any electric cooperative or coordinated group of electric cooperatives for the purpose of lending the funds to their customers to make energy saving retrofit and structural improvements.

Community Development

- **Strategic Economic and Community Development**
The bill authorizes the Secretary to give priority to applications submitted for funds through Rural Development programs that support regional approaches to community and economic development. These applications should reflect the participation of multiple stakeholders in the service area of the proposal. The applications should also have clear objectives and an explanation of performance measures that will be used to determine progress in meeting those objectives.
- **Technical Assistance for Community Facilities Projects**
The bill authorizes the Secretary to make up to three percent of funds provided through the Community Facilities Loan and Grant Program available to applicants for

technical assistance. Many rural communities do not have full-time staff to assist in the preparation of funding applications. This provision will help smaller communities in the development of their applications to the Community Facilities program, which supports projects related to economic development, public safety, and health care delivery.

While Sen. Brown strongly supported the final product of the Agriculture Committee's work to improve the rural development provisions of the *Agriculture Reform, Food, and Jobs Act of 2013*, he was deeply disappointed that no mandatory funding was allotted for these important programs. Since 1996, Congress has provided an average of \$413 million per Farm Bill for the Rural Development title, while the new bill, as reported by the Committee, included no funding at all.

Determined to ensure the final version of the Farm Bill that passed the Senate included funding for key rural development programs, Sen. Brown wrote and worked to garner support for an amendment to do just that.

An amendment offered by Sen. Brown during 2012 consideration of the Farm Bill, garnered the support of more than 185 organizations including: National Association of Counties, National Association of Development Organizations, Farmers Union, Farmers Market Coalition, National Rural Water Association, National Young Farmers Association, Association of Towns and Townships, National Association of RC&Ds, National League of Cities, National Rural Housing Coalition, Rural Community Assistance Partnership, National Sustainable Agriculture Coalition, Center for Rural Affairs, American Public Works Association, and League of Rural Voters.

The amendment was considered by the full Senate and passed on a vote of 55-44 in 2012. Many of the provisions were included in the 2014 Farm Bill:

- **Value-Added Producer Grant Program (VAPG)**
Provides working capital and business development funds for on-farm and local processing and retail agriculture. Sen. Brown's amendment provides \$50 million in funding to VAPG. The 2008 Farm Bill provided \$15 million in mandatory funding along with an authorization for an additional \$40 million in annual discretionary funding. The bill passed by the Senate Agriculture Committee did not fund the VAPG program.
- **Rural Micro-entrepreneur Assistance Program (RMAP)**
Provides financial assistance to businesses with fewer than 10 full-time employees to support the development of entrepreneurial activities in rural areas. The program requires a 15 percent match and is targeted towards those who could compete in the private sector but lack access to credit and have limited equity capital options. Sen. Brown's amendment provides \$15 million in funding to RMAP, which was created in the 2008 Farm Bill and authorized a total of \$15 million in mandatory funding. The bill passed by the Senate Agriculture Committee did not fund RMAP.

- **Water/Wastewater Backlog**
Provides technical and financial assistance for water and wastewater infrastructure upgrades in small towns and communities in rural areas. Sen. Brown's amendment provides \$50 million in funding to reduce the backlog. The 2008 Farm Bill provided \$120 million in mandatory funding. The bill passed by the Senate Agriculture Committee did not provide any funding for the water/wastewater backlog.
- **Beginning Farmer and Rancher Development Program (BFRDP)**
Provides competitively awarded funding through the National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA) for education, extension, outreach, and technical assistance initiatives directed at helping beginning farmers and ranchers of all types.

Energy & Environment

Ohio's Clean Energy Economy

Senator Brown has played an active role in reshaping our nation's energy policy to focus on decreasing American dependence on foreign oil, diversifying our energy supply, increasing energy efficiency, and creating good-paying manufacturing jobs in Ohio. He has long recognized that a smart energy policy is also a smart jobs policy that can help to make Ohio a leader not only in traditional fuel sources, including natural gas and coal, but also clean energy technology like wind, solar, and biomass. From the 300 megawatt, 156 turbine Blue Creek wind farm in Van Wert and Paulding Counties, to the potential of new shale plays in southeastern Ohio, Sen. Brown has long supported a responsible all of the above approach to help solve our nation's energy challenges.

Promoting Clean Energy Manufacturing



While Ohio is a national leader in clean energy manufacturing, about 70 percent of the components of clean energy systems are built outside of the United States. Sen. Brown believes that we must not trade our dependence on foreign oil for a dependence on foreign-manufactured clean energy sources. As worldwide demand for renewable energy increases, this growing sector will provide a significant opportunity for the U.S. to restore its industrial base and create good-paying American jobs.

That's why Sen. Brown has advocated for the expansion of tax credits for manufacturers who are seeking to create new products by creating equipment used for clean energy production in the U.S. and for the extension of other renewable energy tax credits that directly benefit Ohio manufacturers in the wind and solar power supply chain.

Supporting Offshore Wind Energy in Lake Erie

Ohio is also home to several wind projects and Lake Erie has the potential to house the United States' first freshwater offshore wind project. Wind energy not only generates clean, renewable energy but it also creates jobs. Offshore wind energy has the potential to bring thousands of new manufacturing jobs to Ohio and clean energy to millions of homes near Lake Erie.

Sen. Brown continues to work closely with wind experts, developers, and universities in northern Ohio to help coordinate offshore wind research and development and to help implement efforts to build the first freshwater wind farm in Lake Erie. Sen. Brown has continued to work with project developers to ensure the future success of this project.

Creating Natural Gas Jobs in Ohio

Sen. Brown believes that natural gas deposits in the Marcellus and Utica shale have the potential to create jobs in eastern Ohio, boost Ohio's steel and chemical industry, and provide a cleaner burning fuel source. He believes that new jobs in this industry should be going to Ohioans, not

workers brought in from out-of-state and that drilling companies should be using materials and supplies made and constructed by Ohio manufacturers.

Sen. Brown continues to work to ensure that our air and water is protected, that the industry is following stringent standards that protect the environment for current and future generations, and that property owners leasing their land are getting a fair deal from oil and gas companies. Sen. Brown believes that empowering local communities to make decisions on this critical issue is important and has expressed his concern about injection wells for disposal of wastewater from the hydrofracking process that has been linked to earthquakes in the Mahoning Valley.

Protecting Lake Erie

Sen. Brown believes that Lake Erie is one of Ohio's most valuable resources, and he is dedicated to protecting it. He is an original cosponsor of a number of bills that would improve water quality, promote economic development, and stop the spread of invasive species that harm the Great Lakes.

Improving Water Quality and Reducing Algal Blooms in Lake Erie

A clean and healthy Lake Erie benefits all Ohioans. Recent studies have shown that increased investment in the Great Lakes would have a benefit of more than \$50 billion on the economies of the eight Great Lakes states. However, the Western Lake Erie Basin has been experiencing growing algal blooms that pose a threat to Ohio's economy and Ohioans' ability to enjoy the lake. That is why Sen. Brown has been working with the USDA's Natural Resource Conservation Service to address head-on the challenges facing this critical watershed.

Harmful Algal Blooms

Senator Brown was actively engaged with Toledo officials during the drinking water ban in August 2014. From working with local, state, and federal officials, Sen. Brown provided assistance to ensure that Toledoans could have confidence in the safety of their drinking water. In light of Toledo Mayor Michael Collins' efforts during the crisis, Sen. Brown invited him to appear before the Senate Agriculture Committee to testify about the importance of protecting our Great Lakes.

In response to the August 2014 harmful algal bloom that resulted in a drinking water ban in Toledo, Sen. Brown introduced the *Safe and Secure Drinking Water Protection Act of 2014* to require the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to provide a public health advisory for microcystin treatment standards. This important bill was passed by the Senate in December; unfortunately the House of Representatives did not pass this critical legislation.



infrastructure investments.

Realizing that there is no silver bullet to reducing elevated phosphorous and nitrogen levels in the Western Lake Erie Basin, Sen. Brown focused his efforts on providing assistance to communities to reduce the number of combined sewage overflows (CSOs) in the watershed and reducing agricultural runoff. In September, Sen. Brown introduced the *Clean Water Affordability Act* to provide additional funding mechanisms to accelerate the elimination of CSOs in Ohio and to provide relief to ratepayers helping fund these necessary

Sen. Brown also worked with the United States Department of Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack to provide additional assistance to producers in northwest Ohio. In late summer, Sen. Brown and Sec. Vilsack announced more than \$3 million in emergency conservation funding to reduce runoff in the Maumee River watershed. And, after months of advocacy by Sen. Brown, in January 2015, USDA announced that an Ohio-Indiana-Michigan proposal to improve water quality in Lake Erie was the recipient of a \$17.5 million funding announcement from the Sen. Brown-supported Regional Conservation Partnership Program.

Great Lake Restoration Initiative

Sen. Brown has been a leading champion of restoring Lake Erie to full health and the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative (GLRI) – a program that creates a dedicated fund for ecosystem restoration, improvements to water quality, and wildlife and fish restoration in the Great Lakes. Since its inception in 2009, more than \$20 million in funding is at work in Ohio in cleaning up Lake Erie, restoring ecosystems and improving fisheries in the watershed, promoting cleaner water, and keeping invasive species out of Lake Erie.

In the fall of 2014, Sen. Brown joined other members of the Ohio delegation to announce nearly \$12 million in targeted GLRI funding to improve water quality in the Western Lake Erie Basin.

Stopping the Possible Invasion of Asian Carp

Sen. Brown has long been concerned with the possible spread of Asian carp into the Great Lakes. Asian carp is an invasive species that would threaten the ecosystem of Lake Erie. Researchers have found that in many sections of the Mississippi and Illinois Rivers, Asian carp are the only species present. More than 185 species of invasive fish, mussels, and plants from Asia and Eastern Europe are already in the Great Lakes system, choking out native species. Sen. Brown has continued to strongly urge the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) to better focus its efforts to keep Asian carp out of the Great Lakes system via hydrological separation of the Mississippi and Great Lakes watersheds. He also believes efforts must be undertaken to eliminate any possible pathways between the Ohio River and Lake Erie watersheds that could result in the migration of the invasive species.

A bipartisan amendment unanimously approved by the Senate, and passed into law in the *Water Resources and Reform Act of 2014*, will require the USACE to further study the spread of Asian carp up the Ohio River and its tributaries.

Protecting our Public Lands

Sen. Brown continued his long-standing support for the National Heritage Area (NHA) designation of the Ohio & Erie Canalway Corridor – which includes more than 86 miles of the Towpath Trail in Cuyahoga, Summit, Stark, and Tuscarawas Counties. This NHA designation was included in the Public Lands title of the *National Defense Authorization Act* that passed in December 2014. The renewal will last an additional seven years and make the Corridor eligible to receive federal funding.

Ohio was the key state on the Underground Railroad and has a proud history of preserving many of these historic structures. In 2014, Sen. Brown introduced legislation that would take the first step in creating a national monument to recognize John P. Parker, an African American abolitionist, businessman and former slave from Ripley, Ohio. His home, the John P. Parker House was an important stop on the Underground Railroad and provides an informative look at Parker's life, antislavery activism, and business success. It highlights the untold and often overlooked story of African Americans' role in abolition and the Underground Railroad. Making the Parker House part of the National Park System would complement other Ohio sites such as the John Rankin House in Ripley and the National Underground Railroad Freedom Center in Cincinnati.

Sen. Brown continues to advocate for funding and programming at the Charles Young House in Wilberforce, Ohio. With Sen. Brown's urging, in 2013, President Obama designated the Charles Young House as a national monument. Colonel Charles Young was the third African American graduate of the United States Military Academy and the highest-ranking African American Commanding Officer in the Army from 1894 to 1922. He was the first African American superintendent of a national park.

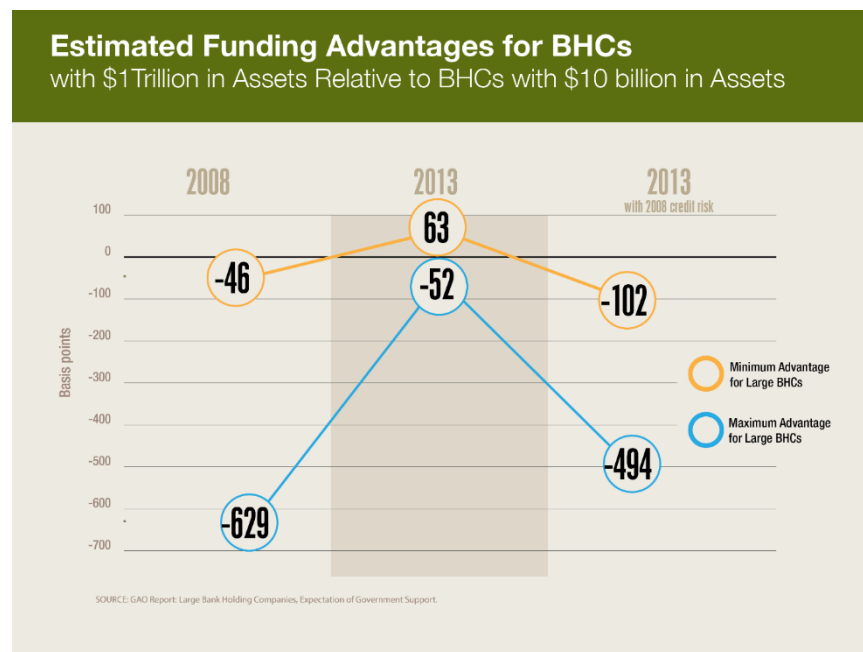
Conservation Efforts

The final resolution passed by the 113th Congress, was Senator Brown and Portman's resolution honoring the centennial of the death of Martha, the last known passenger pigeon in the world, at the Cincinnati Zoo. Her death sparked domestic wildlife conservation efforts and this bill was used to highlight the continued need to conserve wildlife habitats.

Financial Services and Consumer Protection

Too Big to Fail

In January 2013, Sen. Brown joined with his Republican Banking Committee colleague, Sen. David Vitter of Louisiana, to initiate a study by the Government Accountability Office (GAO) of the financial benefits that the largest Wall Street banks enjoy as a result of their “Too Big to Fail” status. The GAO released their study in July 2014, finding that the largest banks enjoy a taxpayer-funded advantage – over community and regional banks – that widens during times of economic crisis:



Since 2011, Sens. Brown and Vitter have urged the banking regulators – the Federal Reserve, the Office of the Comptroller of the Currency (OCC), and the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (FDIC) – to simplify and strengthen capital rules for banks. In September, the Federal banking agencies implemented a higher leverage ratio for the eight largest U.S. banks, with more than \$700 billion in assets or \$10 trillion under custody, requiring them to

have more capital relative to debt. In December, the Federal Reserve proposed a higher capital ratio for these banks – going above and beyond that which was required by the Basel III international agreement.

Physical Commodities

After alarming reports of bank holding companies controlling the price and supply of physical commodities – like aluminum or oil – Sen. Brown held a series hearing examining this practice and its effects on consumers and manufacturers. In recent years, banks have utilized a number of waivers and loopholes in the law, with occasional sign-off from federal regulators, to expand business operations into physical commodities and energy. In January, Sen. Brown’s hearing shed light on the Federal Reserve’s oversight of industry practices and focused on the high costs manufacturers and consumers pay for items like a can of soda or beer because of artificially high prices driven by Wall Street banks. In preparation for the hearing, the Federal Reserve announced a proposal for more stringent regulation of banks’ physical commodities activities. Sen. Brown also pressed the Commodity Futures Trading Commission (CFTC) to enhance its oversight of the world’s largest metal market, the London Metal Exchange.

Regulatory Capture at the New York Fed

In November, Sen. Brown held a hearing on regulatory capture at the Federal Reserve Bank of New York. The hearing followed media reports of secretly taped conversations between Federal Reserve Bank of New York officials documenting low morale and lax supervision of regulated entities, particularly the nation's largest banks. There were also news reports that New York Fed employees passed confidential information to former New York Fed employees employed at one of the nation's largest banks. Sen. Brown pressed New York Fed President Bill Dudley to address capture issues and supervision at the New York Fed.

Insurance

Sen. Brown and Sen. Mike Johanns worked for more than two years to ensure that the Federal Reserve would set appropriate capital requirements for insurance companies, like Ohio's Nationwide and Westfield Insurance, under a provision the *Dodd-Frank Act*, known as the Collins Amendment. Sen. Brown led a letter on this issue in 2012 with 24 bipartisan signatories. In February 2014, Sen. Brown chaired a hearing on the proper capital rules for insurance companies, at which Columbus-based Nationwide Insurance provided testimony. Sen. Brown also introduced S. 2270, a second piece of legislation addressing the issue, with Sen. Susan Collins and Sen. Johanns. S. 2270 passed the Senate unanimously on June 3, 2014. It passed the House of Representatives in December, and was signed into law by President Obama on December 18, 2014.

Protecting Consumers from Predatory Payday Loans

In March, Sen. Brown chaired a subcommittee hearing examining issues affecting unbanked and "underbanked" Americans, including payday loans, installment loans, auto title loans, and deposit advance loans. David Rothstein, Director of Resource Development and Public Affairs at Neighborhood Housing Services of Greater Cleveland, appeared as a witness before the subcommittee and provided testimony on the effects that such products have on Ohio consumers.

After a June decision by the Ohio Supreme Court undermined laws to protect Ohio consumers from predatory loans, Sen. Brown sent a letter to the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau (CFPB) calling on the regulator to provide more robust consumer protections to ensure hardworking Ohio families don't fall prey to predatory loans that keep consumers trapped in a cycle of debt. Sen. Brown called on the CFPB to use its authority to implement rules that fill gaps created by inadequate state laws, exemplified by the Ohio Supreme Court ruling.

Consumer Asset Building

More than 40 percent of American households lack enough savings to cover basic expenses for three months. According to the Pew Foundation's Economic Mobility Project, 71 percent of children born to high-saving but low-income parents move up from the bottom income quintile over one generation. This is compared to only 50 percent of children from similarly low-income households whose parents did not save.



With fellow Senate Economic Mobility Caucus member Sen. Jerry Moran, Sen. Brown introduced the *American Savings Promotion Act*. The *American Savings Promotion Act* expands the ability of certain banks, thrifts, and credit unions – which are currently prohibited from participating due to outdated federal law – to offer prize-linked savings products. Prize-linked savings accounts are safe, regulated accounts that incentivize savings by offering account holders the opportunity to win prizes as they accumulate savings. The Cleveland Plain Dealer called these accounts a “great way to bring the excitement of saving to far more institutions – and the security of having some money socked away for an emergency to far more deserving people.” The *American Savings Promotion Act* passed the Senate unanimously on December 11, 2014, and was signed into law by the President on December 18th. Ohio needs additional state legislation to make prize-linked savings available at its banks and credit unions.

Credit Unions and Community Banks

Financial institutions – including banks and credit unions – must send their customers an annual privacy notice for the duration of the customer relationship. Unfortunately, these annual privacy notices have become so long, cluttered, and routine that most consumers are either confused by them, or they simply do not read them at all. The requirement is quite costly for small institutions like community banks and credit unions.

Sen. Brown and Sen. Jerry Moran have introduced the *Privacy Notice Modernization Act* to lessen the paperwork burden for small banks and credit unions. To reduce unnecessary red tape, the *Privacy Notice Modernization Act* would allow a bank that does not share customer information, other than as permitted by one of the exceptions, the option to forego delivery of the annual notice unless there has been a change in the bank’s privacy policy. An institution’s privacy policy will still be available to customers.

The legislation has 75 bipartisan cosponsors and has been endorsed by the American Bankers Association, the American Financial Services Association, the Consumer Bankers Association, the Credit Union National Association, the Financial Services Roundtable, the Independent Community Bankers Association, the National Association of Federal Credit Unions, and the U.S. Chamber of Commerce. In October, the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau (CFPB) finalized a rule implementing changes to privacy notice policies, consistent with parts of the *Privacy Notice Modernization Act*.

Tax Policy that Works for Working Ohioans

This was Sen. Brown's inaugural Congress as a member of the Finance Committee and a Chairman of the Subcommittee on Social Security, Pensions and Family Policy. Sen. Brown carved out a focus on income inequality and opportunity, retirement security and Social Security, international corporate tax reform, and economic development. Sen. Brown established a legislative agenda through a mix of markups, hearings, legislation, speeches, letters, and press.

Markups

As a member of the powerful Senate Finance Committee, Sen. Brown worked on marking up two important pieces of legislation. The first was a one-year patch of the funding for the Highway Trust Fund. The Highway Trust Fund is a user fee based system to fund roads, bridges, and other infrastructure. The second, was a bipartisan package of over 50 tax cuts that passed out of the committee by voice vote.

Highway Trust Fund

The Finance Committee is responsible for funding the transportation reauthorization. Specifically, this consists of finding sufficient revenue to fund the Highway Trust Fund (HTF).



Sen. Brown was part of a group of senators that pushed behind the scenes to fund the short-term extension of the HTF by providing pension plans with funding relief.

Workers Misclassification

The classification of workers is important for two reasons. First, employers who classify their workers as independent contractors are not responsible for paying payroll taxes, unemployment insurance, or providing a safe and nondiscriminatory workplace.

Second, employers who misclassify their workers have a competitive advantage over firms that properly classify their workers as employees. The IRS has little ability to reclassify workers. This is because of something called the 530 Safe Harbor. In 1978, Congress passed a reprieve for employers that would protect them from having the IRS classify their workers. The provision was enacted to provide Congress with time to find a permanent solution for workers classification issues and was designed to expire after one year. Instead, Congress repeatedly extended the provision making it permanent in 1982. Sen. Brown is the lead sponsor of the *Fair Playing Field Act*, which ends the moratorium on the IRS issuing new guidance to address worker classification. The legislation also requires the Treasury to issue prospective guidance clarifying what constitutes employee status.

Tax Extenders

The senator had a profound impact on the debate around tax extenders. In April, the Senate Finance Committee marked up a bill that included over 50 temporary tax provisions. This package included many provisions that directly benefit Ohio families and businesses. These provisions include the Research and Development credit, credits for the development of:

- Inclusion of Health Coverage Tax Credit (HCTC)
- Inclusion of Manufacturing Communities
- Initial Exclusion of CFC Look-Through
- Final Exclusion of paid preparers language

Expanding Tax Credits and Rewarding Companies That Do the Right Thing

Expanding the New Markets Tax Credit

The Manufacturing Communities Tax Credit Act would expand the New Markets Tax Credit (NMTC) annual allocation from \$3.5 billion to \$5 billion. The legislation creates a new program that would allocate \$1 billion annually to allocate credits for investments in communities that have suffered significant job losses. The bill also makes a substantive change to the NMTC. Traditionally the credit is allocated for investments in census tracts with a low-income population. This presents a challenge for using the credit to support investments in manufacturing since these businesses are typically located in low-population areas as opposed to low-income communities.



Patriot Employer Tax Credit

Sen. Brown partnered with Sen. Dick Durbin to draft the *Patriot Employer Tax Credit Act*. The legislation would provide employers with a credit for every U.S. employee. To qualify an employer must: (1) invest in American jobs; (2) provide reasonable wages; (3) provide quality health insurance; (4) prepare workers for retirement; (5) support our troops and disabled workers.

Pay What You Owe Before You Go

Sens. Brown and Durbin also introduced the *Pay What You Owe Before You Go Act*. This bill would require corporations to pay deferred taxes on any overseas profits before they could invert the locations of headquarters. This means companies who relocate to foreign countries have to settle their tab before leaving the United States.

Opposing Tax Inversions

Sen. Brown was one of the first members of the Senate and the Finance Committee to speak out against the legal practice of tax inversion – the process of merging a U.S. corporation with a foreign competitor for the purpose of reducing the new entities U.S. tax burden. In particular, Sen. Brown was the first person to publically oppose a merger between Burger King and Tim Horton's that would have allowed the company to save millions by avoiding paying U.S. taxes.

Expanding Critical Tax Relief for Working Families

Sen. Brown was the lead sponsor of the *Working Families Tax Relief Act*, a bill that would expand the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) and the Child Tax Credit (CTC). In this role, he advocated for trading expansions of the credits for permanent tax policies in a lame-duck tax negotiation. Sen. Brown was the first person to publically make this case in the press by talking with Bloomberg's Richard Rubin. Sen. Brown's office then made the case to numerous organizations and businesses across the political spectrum while Sen. Brown pressed the case with his colleagues on the Finance Committee and the Administration. Sen. Brown's strategy was successful, and EITC and CTC became the Democratic "ask" in the negotiation to extend tax provisions. However, negotiations broke down when the Majority Leader Harry Reid and Senator Charles Schumer attempted to negotiate a side deal with House Republicans that did not include the EITC and the CTC. Sen. Brown worked with the White House to rally Democratic support for a presidential veto of such a deal.

The Health Coverage Tax Credit (HCTC) is a refundable tax credit that pays 72.5 percent of the insurance premiums of workers who receive Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) or were participants in defined benefit pension plans that have become insolvent and been taken over by the Pension Benefit Guarantee Corporation. After passing an amendment in Committee to extend the HCTC for two years, Sen. Brown led two letters to the Congressional leadership urging the inclusion of the HCTC in any package of legislation that was sent to the President's desk during the lame-duck session.

Advocating for Tax Reform

In key policy addresses throughout the year, Sen. Brown outlined his goals for tax reform.

At a speech before the Tax Coalition, the trade organization of women who work in tax professions in Washington, D.C., Sen. Brown framed the key principles of tax reform including a global minimum tax; protecting domestic investment; and expanding refundable credits that help reduce poverty.

Tax Council

Sen. Brown also spoke to the Tax Council, the primary tax trade organization for large law firms and corporations. In a keynote speech, he laid out an argument for incremental tax reform instead of waiting for comprehensive tax reform. Sen. Brown argued that instead of putting all tax legislation on hold until comprehensive reform becomes possible, the tax writing committees should focus on discrete areas of the code where bipartisan agreements already exist.

Building and Protecting Americans' Retirement Security

Sen. Brown chaired the Senate Finance Committee's Subcommittee on Social Security, Pensions and Family Policy. Sen. Brown chaired subcommittee hearings on Social Security and the retirement crisis.

Retirement for Low-Income Workers

In February 2014, Sen. Brown chaired a hearing on retirement savings for low-income workers. The hearing featured testimony from Treasury and Vanguard. It was the first hearing on the new Treasury program called "MyRA." MyRA is a program that will provide workers in low-wage jobs without employer-provided retirement programs access to a low-fee retirement plan without a minimum balance or minimum contribution.

Expanding Social Security



In May 2014, Sen. Brown chaired a hearing on expanding Social Security. The hearing included testimony from the Social Security Administration (SSA), the Office of the Chief Actuary of the Social Security Administration, and economists from George Mason and the New School for Social Research. The hearing focused on proposals to expand Social Security to meet the challenges of an aging population with insufficient savings for retirement.

Defending Social Security Disability Insurance

While Republican colleagues on the Finance Committee sought to dismantle Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI), Sen. Brown organized his colleagues to defend the program which benefits Americans with disabilities, children, and veterans. Sen. Orrin Hatch requested this hearing as a vehicle to argue that not only does Disability Insurance have a serious financing issue, but it also is rife with fraud and in need of structural reform. Further, Sen. Hatch believed that this hearing was a great chance to make the case that these structural reforms should accompany any reallocation of payroll taxes that finance the trust funds. Sen. Brown, in his role as Chairman of the Subcommittee, played a key role in organizing the Democratic defense of SSDI. He assisted the Chairman in planning the hearing and whipped his colleagues to attend.

Sen. Brown was perhaps the first senator to recognize the burgeoning threat to Social Security from a backdoor attack on Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI). In a keynote at the Center for American Progress, Sen. Brown explained how the attack on SSDI was just the latest effort by Republicans to undermine Social Insurance.

Restoring Supplemental Security Income

Supplemental Security Income (SSI) program, established in 1974, pays a minimum income to Americans with disabilities, the blind, and other low-income individuals who have limited income and resources. The maximum federal SSI payment is \$721 per month for an individual in

2014. Benefit maximums are adjusted annually to reflect changes in the cost of living. Most SSI recipients have other income; their countable income is subtracted from the federal benefit rate to determine their SSI eligibility and payment amount. In calculating countable income, SSI provides for certain income and asset exclusions. These limits have not been updated since 1989 and are not indexed for inflation. Sen. Brown's legislation would update those limits to reflect inflation since 1989 and then index the limits respectively. This bill encourages low-income, elderly, and workers with disabilities to seek some connection to the workforce without risking losing their benefits.

Helping American Airline Employees Protect Their Savings

Previous law allowed airline employees the ability to roll up to 90 percent of the amount received in an airline carrier bankruptcy into an individual retirement account (IRA) through April 15, 2013, provided the employee's airline filed for bankruptcy prior to 2007. Any such amount rolled over into an IRA is excluded from gross income. This rollover option has been available to employees at United, Delta, Northwest, and US Airways – as all these carriers declared bankruptcy prior to 2007. American Airlines declared bankruptcy on November 29, 2011 and had not emerged from bankruptcy by April 15, 2013. As such, American Airlines employees were precluded from having the option of rolling over any received contributions due to bankruptcy proceedings into an individual retirement account. Sen. Brown introduced legislation with Sen. Inhofe to correct this wrong. The bill passed the Senate by unanimous consent and the House by voice vote and was signed by the President.

Getting Answers for Delphi Salaried Retirees

The Delphi Salaried Retirees defined benefit pension plan was taken over by the Pension Benefit Guarantee Corporation (PBGC) in the series of financial maneuvers that led to the bailout of the auto industry. Since that time, Sen. Brown has advocated for the retirees to receive what is called a final benefit determination. This is what PBGC will be able to pay retirees with the assets under the plans management. Traditionally this process can take as much as three years. Today the Delphi retirees have been waiting over five years for a final determination from the PBGC. In response, Sen. Brown led a letter Sec. Perez requesting a final determination date. The Secretary, who is the head of the PBGC, received Sen. Brown's letter and in his response set out a clear calendar of milestones that will culminate in an October 2015 final determination date. The PBGC has met the first two milestones.

Fighting for a Healthy America

Sen. Brown has been working to enhance prevention and improve access to high-quality, affordable, evidence-based health care for Ohioans – and all Americans – including children, seniors, women, and working families.

Cancer Care

Cancer takes a tremendous toll on the nation, and finding cures for its many virulent forms, especially those that affect children, should be a top priority for policy-makers. Sen. Brown has set his sights on diseases that are especially egregious, like cancer. By concentrating efforts and pooling federal and nonfederal resources into cancer research, prevention, and treatment, we can make progress on these this deadly disease.

Preventing Cancer

In 2015, it is expected that there will be more than 1,658,000 new cancer diagnoses and more than 589,000 people will lose their lives to cancer in the U.S. alone. Early detection of cancer saves thousands of lives each year, and many more lives could be saved if more individuals took advantage of early screening opportunities available to them. The earlier cancers are found, the more treatment options there are. This is why Sen. Brown is dedicated to ensuring all Americans have access to the best screening and prevention techniques available.

The *Affordable Care Act* (ACA) has already made tremendous strides in increasing access to important preventive care services, providing more Americans the opportunity to receive regular health care that can help with early diagnosis and treatment of cancer and its risk factors. The ACA has ended insurance coverage denials for those with pre-existing conditions, unjustifiable premium rate hikes, and caps on annual and lifetime insurance coverage limits. It has also eliminated co-payments and deductibles for preventive screenings like mammograms and colonoscopies. Sen. Brown understands that access to affordable, quality health insurance is essential to fighting cancer, which is one of the many reasons he voted for and continues to support the health reform law.



Beyond the ACA, Brown supports additional policy measures to help ensure access to preventive services and cancer screenings.

In an effort to promote early detection, he cosponsored the *Breast Density and Mammography Reporting Act*, which would require mammography reports to include detailed information on a patient's breast tissue density. This legislation would ensure women receive the information necessary to understand their risks of

developing breast cancer and make informed decisions. He was also a cosponsor of the *Education and Awareness Requires Learning Young* (EARLY) *Reauthorization Act*, which was

passed into law in December 2014. This law will renew the federal government's commitment to breast cancer education and awareness for young women by developing initiatives to educate young women about breast cancer, the risk factors associated with the disease, and early detection techniques that lead to early diagnosis and treatment. And in May 2014, Sen. Brown joined 44 of his Senate colleagues in a letter to the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) Administrator Marilyn Tavenner, requesting the agency ensure coverage of low-dose CT scans for high-risk Medicare patients to screen for lung cancer. Sen. Brown believes seniors deserve access to this important screening tool, especially since 70 percent of lung cancer occurs in the Medicare population.

Sen. Brown also introduced the *Removing Barriers to Colorectal Cancer Screening Act*. Seniors covered by Medicare are eligible for colorectal cancer screenings without cost-sharing. However, if a physician needs to take a further lifesaving, preventive action—like removing a polyp—while the patient is under anesthesia, the patient is billed as if the procedure was treatment rather than prevention. The *Removing Barriers to Colorectal Cancer Screening Act* would provide a commonsense fix to this situation by waiving the Medicare beneficiary coinsurance when a polyp or other tissue is removed during the colorectal cancer screening colonoscopy, improving care and health outcomes while saving money for both seniors and the Medicare program. As a follow-up to the bill's introduction, Sen. Brown wrote to the Administration urging it to clarify that, just like private health plans, Medicare cannot impose cost-sharing with respect to a polyp removal during a colonoscopy performed as a screening procedure.

Supporting Research

Federal investments in cancer research, especially at the early stages of research when financial incentives for private industry are limited, is crucial in developing better treatments, lowering the chance of death from the disease, and improving the quality of life for cancer patients. Sen. Brown strongly supports ample funding for research conducted through the National Institutes of Health (NIH) and National Cancer Institute (NCI), which is why he signed a letter to the Senate Appropriations Committee urging support for a strong funding stream for the NIH in 2014. Later in the year, he helped support Senate passage of a Resolution recognizing the importance of cancer research and the contributions of scientists, clinicians, and patient advocates across the U.S. who are dedicated to finding a cure for cancer by designating May 2014 as "National Cancer Research Month." In addition, Sen. Brown cosponsored the *Caroline Pryce Walker Conquer Childhood Cancer Reauthorization Act* - legislation that would enhance current research projects in pediatric cancer and establish a database for childhood cancer in an effort to improve cancer care and awareness.

Increasing Access to Treatment

According to the Community Oncology Alliance, more than 1,300 community cancer care centers have closed, consolidated, or reported financial problems since 2008. This is partially because of a reimbursement flaw in the Medicare Part B program: Medicare payments for chemotherapy administrative procedures in the hospital outpatient setting have more than tripled since 2005 while payments to community cancer clinics have decreased by 14.5 percent, clearly favoring hospital-based treatment. This is why Sen. Brown joined a letter to Senate leadership, requesting his colleagues to work together to correct this Medicare Part B reimbursement bias

and protect patients' access to cancer care in their communities and improve the sustainability of the Medicare program.

When CMS proposed new billing codes for breast biopsy procedures, the agency failed to provide an appropriate reimbursement rate for vacuum-assisted biopsy procedures – often the most medically-appropriate biopsy procedure available for patients with breast cancer. Following this oversight, Sen. Brown wrote to the agency, successfully urging it to ensure patient access to the most appropriate standards of care when evaluating and finalizing its rates.

Children's Health

A healthy and productive adulthood begins with a healthy childhood. This is why Sen. Brown has worked to increase the number of pediatric physicians, promote the science behind treatments and cures for pediatric diseases, and ensure health insurance coverage for children.

Championing the CHGME Program

In 1990, Sen. Brown authored legislation that created the current funding mechanism for residency training for pediatric providers, referred to as Children's Graduate Medical Education (CHGME) program. The CHGME program provides freestanding children's hospitals – including seven in Ohio – with resources to help them sustain, improve, and expand their teaching and training opportunities. Over the last decade, Sen. Brown has ensured the continuation of the program through reauthorization legislation and appropriations. In 2013, Sen. Brown was an original cosponsor of the *CHGME Reauthorization Act* which reauthorized the program through 2018 at \$300 million per year.

In 2014, despite the proposed elimination of the CHGME program in the President's FY15 budget, Sen. Brown successfully led a letter signed by 27 of his Senate colleagues to the Senate LHHS Appropriations Subcommittee requesting the funding necessary to continue the CHGME program. CHGME was funded at \$265 million in fiscal year 2014, and will again be funded at \$265 million in 2015.

Improving Pediatric Research

While children make up about 20 percent of the U.S. population, only five percent of NIH's annual research is devoted to pediatrics. If this rate of investment is not expanded, discoveries of new treatments and therapies for some of the most devastating childhood diseases and conditions will be hindered, and the next generation of researchers may be discouraged from entering into the field of pediatrics. To help address this issue, Sen. Brown introduced the *National Pediatric Research Network Act*, a bill that directs the NIH to establish a nationally-coordinated pediatric research network focused on pursuing new treatments and cures with the intent to save the lives of children and prevent childhood illnesses from evolving into life-threatening and debilitating conditions in adulthood.

This bipartisan bill was passed into law on November 27, 2013. Seeing little movement in the law's implementation, Sen. Brown wrote to the NIH in May of 2014, asking the agency to detail its plans for implementing the *National Pediatric Research Network Act*, and has started to work

with the agency to see that the law effectively builds on the pediatric research programs the NIH already supports.

Setting the Framework for a Healthy Future

Sen. Brown is also dedicated to ensuring all children have access to the resources they need to grow into healthy adults and lead healthy lives, which is why he cosponsored legislation in 2014 that would renew an emphasis on physical education, physical activity, and nutrition in schools – the *FIT Kids Act*. As part of a separate effort, he collaborated with colleagues in sending a letter to the Federal Trade Commission (FTC), urging the agency to do more to restrict the advertising of unhealthy food and beverages to children. He also cosponsored the *Emergency Medical Services for Children Reauthorization Act*, which was passed into law on September 16, 2014.

Consumer Safety and Protection

Public awareness and the development of appropriate safety regulations, labels, and guidelines are all important ways to protect Americans and keep them healthy. Agencies like the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and the Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) play an invaluable role in protecting health and safety of the public by regulating food, drugs, biologics, medical devices, cosmetics, and consumer products. Sen. Brown is dedicated to ensuring that the FDA, CPSC, and other agencies to do more to protect U.S. consumers from new and potentially dangerous products.

Shopping Carts

Each year 24,000 children visit the emergency room for an injury related to a shopping cart. Despite an existing voluntary shopping cart safety standard, children continue to fall from shopping carts at an alarming rate. In January 2014, a study conducted by researchers at Nationwide Children’s Hospital in Columbus, Ohio, found that more than 66 children per day are admitted to the emergency room for injuries related to shopping carts. As a follow-up to these findings, Sen. Brown wrote to the CPSC, urging the agency to establish a stability performance test for shopping carts and increase public awareness about shopping cart safety for children. A revised safety standard that includes a stability performance test is expected in 2015.

Powdered Caffeine



Powdered caffeine, which is cheap and easily available in stores and online, is used by some teens to boost workouts, weight loss, or energy. According to the FDA, a single teaspoon of pure caffeine is roughly equivalent to the amount in 25 cups of coffee. Because the caffeine is so concentrated and hard to measure, it is easy to overdose. After an Ohio teenager accidentally ingested powdered caffeine and passed away, Sen. Brown sent a letter to the FDA, requesting the agency to take additional action to protect American consumers from this dangerous product by banning the sale and marketing of powdered caffeine. As a follow-up to his letter, the Center for Science in the Public Interest submitted a Citizen Petition to the FDA, also requesting the agency to protect the

public's health and welfare by banning the retail sale and marketing of this deadly product. The FDA has committed to looking into this issue.

Liquid Nicotine

In 2013, the U.S. experienced a 300 percent increase in accidental poisonings due to liquid nicotine. Liquid nicotine is toxic if ingested or absorbed through skin in large amounts, and small containers of liquid nicotine – used to refill electronic cigarettes (e-cigs) – contain enough nicotine to kill four small children. As a response to this rapid increase in poisonings, Sen. Brown cosponsored the *Child Nicotine Poisoning Prevention Act* in 2014. This legislation would give the CPSC the authority and direction to issue rules requiring safer, child-resistant packaging for liquid nicotine products. And in March of 2014, Sen. Brown led a letter to the FDA, urging the agency to issue regulations on the manufacturing, marketing, storage, distribution, and sale of “e-liquids,” the cocktails made up of liquid nicotine, flavorings, colorings, and other chemicals that are contained in e-cigs.

Crib Bumpers

According to a study published in the *Journal of Pediatrics* using CPSC data, between 1985 and 2005, there were 27 cases of infant death that involved soft crib bumpers in some capacity. Currently, the CPSC advocates a “bare is best” approach to crib bedding. Unfortunately, the CPSC's safety recommendations for crib bedding are not supported by any mandatory performance standards, and soft bedding remains a significant risk factor for Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS). Although the CPSC was petitioned for a performance review of crib bumpers in 2012, the agency has failed to review this issue or establish a performance standard for crib bumpers. Unsatisfied with this delay, Sen. Brown wrote to the CPSC in September of 2014 to urge the agency to expedite its review of this issue to protect infants from unsafe sleep environments. The agency subsequently committed to making this issue a priority.

Sunscreen Innovation

There are more than two million cases of skin cancer in the U.S. each year and 90 percent are the result of harmful sun exposure. Melanoma, the most deadly type of skin cancer, kills nearly 10,000 Americans a year, yet Americans do not have access to the most advanced sunscreen products that Canadians and those in the EU do. This is why Sen. Brown cosponsored the *Sunscreen Innovation Act* in 2014. This bill, which was signed into law on November 26, 2014, will expedite the review and approval process for over-the-counter sunscreen ingredients so that Americans have access to the best and most effective products.

Pet Treats

Since 2007, the FDA has received hundreds of complaints from consumers across the country who have reported illnesses and deaths of their pets, and has investigated more than 3,600 cases and 500 deaths of suspected poisonings from contaminated chicken “jerky treats” from China. As a follow up to two letters he sent to the FDA on this issue in 2012, Sen. Brown sent another letter to the agency in January of 2014, requesting the FDA take steps to prevent these contaminations in the future to protect public health and the safety of our nation's pets. He also held a hearing on *Pet Treats and Processed Chicken from China* in June of 2014 in his role as Chairman of the Congressional-Executive Commission on China to highlight concerns over the effectiveness of China's food safety regulation for American consumers and pets.

Disabilities

The disability community is diverse, representing developmental disabilities, injury-acquired disabilities, disease-acquired disabilities, and aging-related disabilities. What unites them is a desire for full participation in all aspects of American life – basic human and civil rights. Sen. Brown is dedicated to empowering every American, including those with disabilities, in their pursuit of the American dream.

Health Care

Since 1965, Medicaid has been an essential program for people with disabilities— providing health care services for low-income Americans – including seniors, pregnant women, people with disabilities, and children. 68 million Americans currently receive health care through Medicaid. Senator Brown has fought and will continue to fight to protect and strengthen Medicaid, despite efforts by Republican members of Congress who want to turn Medicaid into a block grant program.

Additionally, the ACA has and will continue to make health insurance more affordable, comprehensive, and secure for millions of American families. For Americans with disabilities and their families, health reform means never running into a lifetime cap. It also means that no one will be denied coverage on the private market because of a pre-existing condition like asthma or diabetes.

Economic Security

Sen. Brown has long supported the *Achieving a Better Life Experience (ABLE) Act*. He has been a cosponsor of every version of this legislation since its first introduction. The *ABLE Act* would allow individuals to establish tax-exempt ABLE accounts for family members with disabilities. These accounts could be used to pay for certain expenses such as education, housing, transportation, employment support, medical care, and other life necessities. When it looked like momentum for the ABLE Act was stalling in the Senate, Sen. Brown signed on to a letter to Senate leadership, encouraging his colleagues to take the bill up for consideration before the end of the year. On December 19, 2014, President Obama signed the ABLE Act into law.

Ending Discrimination

Sen. Brown is an outspoken supporter of the Senate ratification of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities treaty. This commonsense treaty would require all signatory nations to promote or undertake measures that will remove existing discriminatory practices against persons with disabilities. Sen. Brown also cosponsored a Resolution in 2014, recognizing the need to improve physical access to many federally funded facilities for all people of the U.S., particularly individuals with disabilities.

Home and Community Based Services

In March 2014, CMS issued a rule to establish Home and Community Based Services (HCBS) quality standards for programs that provide services and supports for individuals with intellectual, developmental, or physical disabilities. HCBS exist to provide opportunities for people to receive services in their home and community, allowing them to participate fully in day-to-day life just as people without disabilities do. The rule is intended to enhance the quality

of these services and provide more protections and opportunities for individuals receiving these services. Enhanced community integration is a worthy goal that respects the desires and preferences of people with disabilities. Sen. Brown has been working closely with CMS and local disability organizations in Ohio to ensure the smooth roll out of these new regulations.

Drugs

Access to safe and affordable prescription drugs is a critical component of any successful healthcare system. That is why Sen. Brown has worked to ensure access to safe and affordable prescription drugs, while also providing ample resources to help prevent and treat drug abuse.

Ensuring Access to Safe, Effective, and Affordable Prescription Drugs

Nearly 70 percent of Americans take at least one prescription drug on a regular basis, and more than 50 percent of individuals take at least two. However, these lifesaving drugs are often too expensive for Americans to afford, and not everyone has access to them because of cost and other burdens. In 2014, Sen. Brown worked tirelessly to ensure that all Americans have access to safe and affordable lifesaving prescription drugs.

In February 2014, when the U.S. Government Accountability Office (GAO) published a report concluding that drug shortages remain a serious problem in the U.S., Sen. Brown wrote a letter to the FDA, demanding that the agency do more to combat existing and future drug shortages. Drug shortages come at a significant cost to patients, their families, hospitals, doctors, pharmacists, and the economy; it is estimated that drug shortages cost hospitals alone almost \$230 million each year. As part of this fight against drug shortages, Sen. Brown worked closely with the FDA to help mitigate the shortage of Doxorubicin (commonly known as “Doxil” and used to treat cancer) by urging the agency to approve a temporary manufacturing process waiver for the Ben Venue Laboratories facility located in Bedford to continue domestic production of this life-saving drug while the laboratory underwent transitions in management.

Sen. Brown is also a strong proponent of saving taxpayer dollars and enhancing the effectiveness of existing medications, which is why he was an original cosponsor of the *Medication Therapy Management Empowerment Act*. This bill would have extended an existing program so that more Medicare beneficiaries benefit from assistance managing medications. Individual counseling sessions between patients with multiple chronic illnesses and pharmacists have granted patients more control over their health care and have been shown to reduce overall health care expenditures and patient out-of-pocket costs.

Dedicated to keeping drug costs low, especially for seniors, Sen. Brown was an original cosponsor of the *Medicare Drug Saving Act* during the 113th Congress. The *Medicare Drug Saving Act* would have eliminated a special deal for brand-name drug manufacturers that allows them to charge Medicare higher prices for some seniors’ prescription drugs. This would have saved seniors and taxpayers’ millions of dollars. According to the non-partisan Congressional Budget Office (CBO), the *Medicare Drug Savings Act* would save more than \$141 billion by helping to responsibly reduce the deficit by ending a special interest giveaway that requires the government to pay a higher rate for prescription drugs. And in May of 2014, Sen. Brown signed on to a letter to the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) and the Department of Justice (DOJ) citing

concerns over the potential merger of Pfizer and AstraZeneca, which would have created a monopoly and increased prices in the prescription drug market.

He is also a faithful supporter of the 340B drug discount program, which allows safety net providers to access to low cost prescription medications by requiring drug manufacturers to offer prescription drugs to these providers at significantly reduced prices. In July, Sen. Brown wrote to the Senate Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions (HELP) Committee expressing support for the 340B program, and later wrote to HHS and USTR in December, encouraging the Administration to protect government programs like 340B in its negotiations with other countries over the Trans Pacific Partnership (TPP) trade agreement.

In addition to these efforts, Sen. Brown signed on to several letters to the Administration in 2014 to encourage regulatory policy designed to protect consumers by ensuring access to safe and affordable prescription drugs. For example, when access to certain medications under Medicare was threatened in February of 2014, Sen. Brown signed on to a letter with his Senate Finance Committee colleagues urging CMS not to eliminate protected class status for several medications under Medicare Part D. In March, Sen. Brown signed on to two letters urging the FDA to create clearer guidelines for drug development applications and hold generic drug manufacturers responsible for risk labeling to protect beneficiaries. And in April, Sen. Brown signed on to a letter encouraging CMS to allow any willing pharmacy, including community pharmacies, to participate in Medicare Part D's preferred pharmacy networks – enabling seniors access to affordable drugs at the pharmacy of their choice. Community pharmacies are critical access points not just for filling seniors' prescriptions but also for preventive screenings – especially in rural and underserved areas.

Preventing & Treating Prescription Drug and Heroin Abuse

In recent years, drug overdoses have killed more Ohioans than car crashes. From 2000 to 2012, Ohio's death rate due to drug overdoses increased more than 366 percent -- to five Ohioans a day. Addiction to prescription drugs and heroin has become one of our nation's most challenging public health issues, and Sen. Brown has led the fight to help prevent and crack down on prescription drug abuse.

Addressing drug abuse requires a multi-faceted approach that involves patients, providers, law enforcement, government agencies like the FDA and Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA), and mental health professionals. As part of these efforts, he cosponsored the *National All Schedules Prescription Electronic Reporting (NASPER) Reauthorization Act*, which would extend the Department of Health and Human Services' (HHS) current prescription drug monitoring program and strengthen the interoperability of state monitoring programs.

One of the best ways to cut down on drug abuse is by cutting down on prescription drug fraud and diversion, which is why Sen. Brown wrote a letter to CMS Deputy Administrator



and Director Jonathan Blum in the fall of 2013 urging better oversight over the prevention of prescription fraud and abuse within Medicare’s prescription drug program, Medicare Part D. He also alerted Ohioans every time the DEA hosted a Prescription Drug Take-back Day, an opportunity to bring unused prescriptions to sites all around the state for safe disposal. As a result of just one of these Take-back Days, Ohioans safely disposed of more than 10.5 tons of prescription drugs. Take-back days keep drugs out of wrongful hands who might abuse them.

In addition, Sen. Brown joined Sen. Portman and the rest of the Ohio delegation in a letter to the DEA and the Office of Management and Budget (OMB), urging the Administration to review its Disposal of Controlled Substances rule to ensure the implementation of more permanent, proper drug disposal methods across the country. And in order to encourage greater involvement by the Administration on this issue, in March of 2014 he wrote a letter to U.S. Attorney General Eric Holder urging the DOJ to confront the prescription opioid and heroin epidemic head on.

Sen. Brown’s work also includes efforts to shutter pill mills, monitor physicians whose prescribing patterns are outside the norm, and end the practices of “doctor shopping” and “pharmacy hopping.” He also worked with his Senate colleagues on bipartisan legislation to curb the fraudulent diversion and abuse of prescription drugs involving Medicare beneficiaries. In September, Sen. Brown introduced the *Ensuring Safe Access to Prescription Medication Act*, a bill which would both help to prevent the diversion of controlled substances and also provide for the safe delivery of sterile prescription drugs to a physician’s office for safe and effective delivery to the patient. He also cosponsored the *Preventing Abuse of Cough Treatments (PACT) Act*, a bill designed to prevent the abuse of dextromethorphan (DXM) – an addictive substance used as an ingredient in many over-the-counter cough medicines.

Recognizing that increased access to effective treatment and mental health services are a critical component to tackling drug abuse, he cosponsored *The Recovery Enhancement for Addiction Treatment (TREAT) Act*, which would expand treatment for heroin and prescription drug addiction by allowing physicians who prescribe addiction medications to treat a greater number of patients. The TREAT Act would also permit other qualified health care providers, such as nurse practitioners and physician assistants, to prescribe these medications. In December 2014, he sent a letter with 20 of his Senate colleagues to HHS urging the agency to develop a multi-pronged, national strategy aimed at preventing opioid abuse, with a focus on overdose education, naloxone distribution, and access to substance abuse treatment services and other follow-up care.

Global Health

Ending the Ebola Epidemic

On March 25, 2014, the CDC announced an outbreak of Ebola in Guinea, Liberia, and Sierra Leone. Following this outbreak, the U.S. made tracking and containing the Ebola epidemic a top priority. In addition to partnering with the United Nations to help contain and combat Ebola in West Africa, the country took significant action to help prevent the spread of Ebola here at home. On September 30, 2014, the CDC confirmed the first travel-associated case of Ebola in the U.S. In response, the CDC heightened its surveillance efforts at home and agencies like the National Institutes of Health (NIH) poured additional resources into conducting intensive research on Ebola. In response to the outbreak, Customs and Border Protection (CBP) began to screen

potential travelers for disease, and the Transportation Security Administration began to track and monitor passengers entering the U.S. for signs of illness.

On October 14, 2014, Sen. Brown learned that one of the individuals diagnosed with Ebola in the U.S. spent time in northeast Ohio shortly before her diagnosis. Following this announcement, Sen. Brown wrote several letters to HHS, the CDC, the White House Ebola coordinator, and the FDA, requesting the Administration take a more active role in helping state and local officials prepare for any potential Ebola threat in Ohio. The Administration took Sen. Brown's requests seriously, responding quickly and effectively by sending additional preparedness experts and infection control experts from the CDC to Ohio, and expediting the approval of an effective on-site rapid Ebola test technology for use in commercial settings, like Ohio hospitals. On October 28, 2014, the individual who traveled to Ohio was declared to be free of Ebola, and there were no subsequent cases related to her illness.

In mid-September 2014, President Obama called for an aggressive response to the March 2014 Ebola outbreak in Western Africa, and on November 5, 2014 he submitted an emergency appropriations request of for Ebola to Congress. Sen. Brown supported this \$6.18 billion dollar request, which included \$4.64 billion for immediate needs and \$1.54 billion in contingency funding to help ensure the U.S. maintains its capacity to respond to Ebola both at home and internationally. The majority of the President's request was included in the 2014 spending bill.

Sen. Brown also cosponsored a bill to add Ebola to the FDA's Priority Review Voucher Program. The Priority Review program, authorized in 2007 by a bill authored by Sen. Brown, was created to incentivize the development of new drugs and vaccines for neglected tropical diseases. At the time, Ebola was not included in the list of diseases in the statute. The 2014 legislation added filoviruses, which includes all strains of Ebola and the related Marburg virus, to the list of diseases eligible for priority review. In addition, the legislation makes it easier for the FDA to add diseases to the program in the future, and ensures the program works for all applicable diseases by adding additional value to the vouchers, providing a greater incentive for companies to invest in innovation for neglected tropical diseases, including Ebola. This bill was signed into law at the end of 2014.

Tuberculosis

Tuberculosis (TB) is the leading curable infectious killer in the world, claiming 1.3 million lives per year. The World Health Organization (WHO) calculates that the average TB patient loses three to four months of work-time each year and experiences a loss of up to 30 percent in yearly household earnings. Worldwide, TB is the third leading cause of death among women of reproductive age, and it is an under-recognized health problem in children.

Recognizing the devastating effects of this disease both globally and domestically, Sen. Brown led his Senate colleagues in a letter to the Appropriations Subcommittee on State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs, requesting \$400 million for TB control for FY15. He also sponsored a Resolution in March 2014 to recognize Global TB Day.



Health as a Global Issue

According to the Joint United Nations Program on HIV/AIDS, at the end of 2007, an estimated 41.3 million people were living with HIV/AIDS worldwide, of whom 2.7 million were newly infected. Two million of those people died in the course of that year.

One third of the world's population is infected with TB, of which about one in ten develops the active disease. And according to the World Health Organization, there are about 250 million acute malaria cases each year, causing more than 880 thousand deaths annually.

Sen. Brown supports efforts to fight the world's most devastating health burdens, which is why he was proud to cosponsor two resolutions this year, recognizing and supporting the role of the U.S. in improving global public health. In April, he cosponsored the World Malaria Day Resolution, and in December he cosponsored a Resolution supporting the role of the US in ensuring children in the world's poorest countries have access to vaccines and immunization through GAVI, a public-private partnership focused on saving children's lives. He also signed on to a letter to the Appropriations committee in support of funding for PEPFAR – the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief – which works with the Global Fund and other international organizations to combat AIDS worldwide through prevention, treatment, and care programs.

Ensuring Health Equity

According to the CDC, "Health equity is achieved when every person has the opportunity to 'attain his or her full health potential' and no one is 'disadvantaged from achieving this potential because of social position or other socially determined circumstances.' Health inequities are reflected in differences in length of life; quality of life; rates of disease, disability, and death; severity of disease; and access to treatment." Sen. Brown is dedicated to eliminating health disparities in order to improve our nation's overall public health.

Eliminating Health Disparities

The U.S. has made significant steps toward improving public health and health care, but the health and well-being of members of racial and ethnic minority groups continue to lag behind. Racial minorities, particularly African Americans and Hispanics, are more likely to suffer from



chronic conditions such as heart disease and diabetes. This is one reason why Sen. Brown supported the Affordable Care Act (ACA). As a result of the health law, all Americans – regardless of their race or ethnicity – now have equal access to quality, affordable health care.

The new health law has particularly addressed the needs of minorities and people living in disadvantaged circumstances by providing access to free preventive services like blood pressure and cholesterol screenings, cancer

screenings like pap tests and mammograms for women, and flu shots. The ACA puts a focus on efforts to eliminate health disparities among racial and ethnic groups by expanding health disparities research and cultural competency training among health care providers. It also created an Electronic Health Record (EHR) incentive program to help patients become more involved in their own care. In March 2014, Sen. Brown signed on to a letter to CMS encouraging the agency leverage the EHR incentive program in a way that would help reduce health disparities. Later in the year, Sen. Brown signed a letter to Senate leadership to express his strong support for the training for diversity health professions programs included in the ACA, including the Centers of Excellence program and the Health Careers Opportunity Program.

In an attempt to further eliminate disparities, Sen. Brown introduced the *Breast Cancer Patient Education Act*, which would ensure that all women with breast cancer are informed of their options for breast reconstruction. This information would be particularly beneficial to African American and Hispanic women, who are disproportionately affected by breast cancer and less likely to be well-informed about their care options. After introducing the *Breast Cancer Patient Education Act*, Sen. Brown and Sen. Roy Blunt sent a follow-up letter to HHS, encouraging the Agency to incorporate the policy outlined in the legislation administratively. Sen. Brown also cosponsored the *Reducing Disparities Using Care Models and Education Act*, which would require HHS to work with the Institute of Medicine (IOM) to study health disparities, develop guidelines to reduce disparities, and award grants for programs designed to reduce disparities.

Ensuring Insurance Translates to Care

Another way the ACA has helped expand families' access to health care services is by aligning the payments that primary care physicians receive through Medicaid with Medicare's higher payments. Before the ACA, Medicaid reimbursed at only 59 percent of what Medicare pays primary care providers in Ohio. The ACA's two-year provision to provide pay parity between Medicare and Medicaid for primary care physicians has played an important role in meeting demand for primary care and ensuring access to care for thousands of lower income beneficiaries.

Because this parity in payment was set to expire at the end of 2014, Sen. Brown introduced the *Ensuring Access to Primary Care for Women & Children Act* to extend the reimbursement parity between Medicaid and Medicare and include obstetricians and gynecologists, certified nurse-midwives, nurse practitioners, and physician assistants to better serve families' primary care needs.

Protecting Providers Serving a Disproportionate Share of Low-Income Patients

The Hospital Readmissions Reduction Program (HRRP) was established in 2010 to incentivize coordination of care and reduce preventable readmissions by penalizing hospitals with higher-than-average Medicare readmissions rates. Unfortunately, the measures the HRRP uses to calculate performance do not account for the socioeconomic status of a hospital's patient population despite the fact that countless studies have demonstrated that readmissions are influenced by factors beyond the hospital's control more than any other hospital metric, and the challenges faced by urban and rural low-income populations directly impact these outcomes.

This is why Sen. Brown cosponsored the *Hospital Readmissions Program Accuracy and Accountability Act*, which would require CMS to account for patient socio-economic status when calculating HRRP penalties to improve quality of care, increase accountability for all inpatient hospitals, and further reduce preventable Medicare readmissions. As a follow-up to this bill, Sen. Brown signed on to a letter to the National Quality Forum, requesting the Forum to adopt measures accurately reflecting the quality of care provided by hospitals through adjustment of risk based on sociodemographic and socioeconomic status.

Sen. Brown is also dedicated to supporting Community Health Centers (CHCs). CHCs provide indispensable primary care by offering a wide range of comprehensive health and support services to underserved and uninsured patients nationwide. The ACA included an unprecedented investment in CHCs, allowing them to serve nearly 20 million new patients, and enhance their medical, oral, and behavioral health services. When funding for CHCs was threatened during the 2014 budget process, Sen. Brown wrote to Senate leadership, requesting his colleagues to prioritize funding for these critical safety net providers.

Ending Discriminatory Practices

The current policies in the U.S. governing blood, organ, and tissue donation by men who have sex with men (MSM) are inherently unfair and promote discrimination. FDA policy currently defers MSM blood donors for life and MSM tissue donors for five years. These policies were put in place during a time when there were not accurate screening tests for HIV and other transfusion- and transplantation-transmissible diseases. Now that the technology for risk-based testing is available, there is no excuse for the FDA to continue its discriminatory practices.

Sen. Brown joined with his Senate colleagues to write two letters to the FDA in 2014, encouraging the agency to develop blood, organ, and tissue donation policies that are consistent with American values and based in current science.

Health Reform

The Affordable Care Act (ACA) is the most significant reform to our nation's health care system since Medicare's creation in 1965. It ends insurance coverage denials for those with pre-existing conditions, unjustifiable premium rate hikes, and caps on annual and lifetime insurance coverage limits. Like most laws, the ACA is not perfect, and Sen. Brown will continue to work with colleagues from both parties to make this law better.

Insurance Exchanges

In 2014, Healthcare.gov went live, providing a competitive marketplace where individuals and small businesses can buy quality, affordable health policies that include a number of important consumer protections, including minimum covered benefits and strict limitations on out-of-pocket costs. Sen. Brown worked hard to raise awareness of the exchanges and encourage Ohioans to sign up for quality, affordable health insurance. Despite some significant technical difficulties associated with enrollment, more than 646,000 Ohioans obtained a new health insurance plan through the health reform law – many for the first time in their lives.

Limiting Unfair Competition

Health reform has put pressure on the health care industry to innovate in order to improve quality and lower costs. Unfortunately, at the beginning of 2014 some hospitals tried to utilize unfair business practices in order to compete in the health care industry with rising standards. Sen. Brown joined with several of his Senate colleagues in a letter to the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) at the end of January, encouraging the agency to carefully monitor hospital mergers and acquisitions creating unfair monopolies in the health care market.

Making the Law Better

The ACA includes a number of provisions to help millions of Americans gain access to high-quality, affordable health insurance. At the same time, there remain a number of ways to make it stronger for individuals and families. For example, the law provides premium tax credits to help Americans purchase health insurance coverage when they do not have access to affordable job-based coverage. However, due to a glitch – called the “family glitch” – in the way the law is being interpreted by the Internal Revenue Service (IRS), many middle-class families are prohibited from receiving these tax credits, even when the cost of family coverage is simply unaffordable. Sen. Brown cosponsored the *Family Coverage Act* in 2014 to fix this hiccup and ensure that these families gain access to premium tax credits to help them afford coverage.

Maternal and Infant Health

Healthy moms and babies are a direct indicator of our nation's health. We have a responsibility to make sure that mothers and their children receive the best possible care at the appropriate time, and Sen. Brown is working hard to ensure that our maternal and childhood health programs are successful and well-funded.

Reducing Infant Mortality

Every year, there are more than 25,000 stillbirths in the U.S. Many of these deaths are the result of birth defects, umbilical cord problems, chronic conditions of the mother, or infections.

However, there is no known cause for as many as half of all stillbirths, leaving thousands of parents without any explanation for these deaths. In addition, there are more than 4,600 sudden unexpected infant deaths each year and another 200 children between the ages 1 and 4 who die without any clear cause for their death. Ohio ranks 48th in the country in infant mortality and last in infant mortality for African American babies. Many of these tragedies, both in Ohio and across the country, could be prevented if there were a better understanding of the reasons for these heartbreaking deaths.

Sen. Brown introduced the *Sudden Unexpected Death Data Enhancement and Awareness (SUDDEA) Act* to help enhance awareness about unexpected sudden death in early life and reduce our nation's sobering infant mortality rates. SUDDEA, which was signed into law on December 18, 2014, will provide for the continued development and updating of protocols and data collection related to stillbirths and sudden, unexpected deaths in both infants and children. By better understanding the causes of unexpected sudden death, we can do more to improve the health of infants and children.

Sen. Brown has also partnered with and supported various activities and programs at the state level designed to combat infant mortality, including the Ohio Hospital Association's multi-year infant mortality initiative and the Greater Columbus Infant Mortality Task Force.

Emphasizing Pre- and Post-natal Care

The leading cause of infant morbidity and mortality is preterm birth; nearly 70 percent of babies who die before their first birthday are preemies. Preterm birth is also expensive, accounting for half of all pregnancy-related costs.

Prioritizing programs and guidelines that help reduce the rate of preterm birth is critical to advancing the health of all Americans. In 2011, when the cost of the drug used to prevent pregnant women from delivering premature babies increased in price from \$10 per dose to \$1,500 per dose, Sen. Brown called for a federal investigation on the effect of the price hike on taxpayers and the Medicaid program. Higher costs mean that health insurance companies, including Medicaid, either stop coverage of the treatment or impose higher premiums on consumers. In 2014, Sen. Brown continued to fight against the high costs of this medication and ensure pregnant women retain affordable access to this lifesaving drug.

Recognizing that the health of a mom directly influences the health of a baby, Sen. Brown signed on to a letter urging HHS to advance strategies designed to address postpartum depression through effective screening and treatment. We have a responsibility to make sure that moms and babies get the best possible care, and to ensure that we are holding Medicaid accountable by measuring and evaluating its performance and by giving providers the tools they need to improve care. To support these efforts, Sen. Brown cosponsored the *Quality Care for Moms and Babies Act*, which would speed up the development of evidence-based measures of quality and health outcomes, leading to evidence-based standardized guidelines on how maternity care is to be delivered.

Protecting Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Health

The Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting (MIECHV) program provides federal grants that states and localities use to implement intensive home visiting services for high-risk families, facilitated by nurses, social workers, and parent educators. These trained professionals provide parents with family support and coaching, and help families access community resources. Participants in these programs experience lower rates of abuse, neglect, and incarceration. Sen. Brown has been strong advocate for the MIECHV program since it was established in 2010. In 2014, he helped pass the *Protecting Access to Medicare Act of 2014* in



March, commonly known as the “doc fix”, which included his amendment to extend the MIECHV program for another six months, past its expiration date of September 30, 2014.

Sen. Brown also wrote to the Administration, seeking robust funding for Healthy Start programs, which aim to reduce low birthweight and infant mortality, as well as health disparities in communities of color in the crucial prenatal, perinatal, and postnatal periods. Healthy Start programs

serve pregnant women and families by facilitating access to early prenatal care and providing services such as outreach, home visits, case management, health education, and depression screening to ensure the birth of a healthy newborn.

Medicaid

Medicaid provides health coverage for low-income Americans – primarily children, people with disabilities, poor seniors, and pregnant women. Sixty-eight million Americans currently receive health care through Medicaid. Sen. Brown is committed to ensuring Medicare and Medicaid remain strong for our country’s most vulnerable populations.

Improving Medicaid

In Ohio, the Medicaid program is an essential part of the state’s health care system, its long-term care system for people with disabilities, and its economy. Sen. Brown is proud that the Ohio state government expanded Medicaid under the health reform law, making an additional 300,000 Ohioans eligible for coverage and bringing in valuable federal health care dollars. In 2014 alone, more than 100,000 Ohioans gained insurance through the expanded Medicaid program.

But more must be done to protect Medicaid beneficiaries. In February, Sen. Brown cosponsored the *Medicaid and CHIP Continuous Quality Act*, a bill that would ensure reliable insurance coverage for those individuals who periodically lose coverage due to small, short-term changes in income or administrative burdens. And in July, Sen. Brown introduced the *Ensuring Access to Primary Care for Women & Children Act* to extend the reimbursement parity between Medicaid and Medicare and include obstetricians and gynecologists, certified nurse-midwives, nurse practitioners, and physician assistants to better serve families’ primary care needs.

Medicare

Medicare and Medicaid are essential social programs that reaffirm the government's commitment to seniors and low-income Americans. Prior to the creation of Medicare in 1965, only half of America's seniors had health insurance, and 30 percent of seniors lived below the poverty line. Today, only 1.8 percent lack health coverage and less than nine percent live below the poverty line.

Protecting and Strengthening Medicare for the Future

Over the past several years, Republicans in Congress have attempted to dismantle Medicare in order to help offset the costs of tax cuts for the wealthiest Americans. Some want to raise the eligibility age for seniors to receive Medicare, others want to turn Medicare into a voucher program. Sen. Brown opposes both of these destructive changes; he believes we can increase Medicare's solvency – while also ensuring that it continues to serve older Americans – without cutting benefits or raising the eligibility age.

In 2014, Sen. Brown was an original cosponsor of the *Medicare Protection Act*, which expresses the sense of the Senate that: 1) the Medicare eligibility age should not be increased, and 2) the Medicare program should not be privatized or turned into a voucher system. This legislation would have also amended the *Congressional Budget Act* to make it more difficult for changes that would reduce or eliminate guaranteed benefits or restrict eligibility criteria for Medicare beneficiaries to be included during the budget reconciliation process.

Sen. Brown also believes that we can increase Medicare's solvency while ensuring that it continues to serve older Americans without cutting benefits or raising the eligibility age, through policy changes like the *Strengthening Medicare and Repaying Taxpayers (SMART) Act* and the *Medicare Drug Savings Act*.

Typically, Medicare is the primary payer for health care expenditures. The Medicare Secondary Payer (MSP) program allows for third-party coverage – a spouse's employer coverage, auto or liability insurance, or workers' compensation insurance – to become the primary payer and Medicare serves as the supplemental coverage. The MSP was created to ensure that taxpayer-funded Medicare is not paying for medical bills if another entity should be making the payment. The *Strengthening Medicare and Repaying Taxpayers (SMART) Act* would require Medicare to provide the third party with more information prior to settlement, which would speed up the settlement time and streamline the payment process. Additionally, Medicare would be barred from pursuing claims if the settlement would not cover the costs associated with the recovery efforts. The bill would also limit the amount of personal information the third-party payer could collect from the beneficiary – such as a full Social Security number.

The *Medicare Drug Savings Act* would eliminate a special deal for brand-name drug manufacturers that allows them to charge Medicare higher prices for some seniors' prescription drugs. This bill would require drug companies to provide rebates to the federal government on drugs used by nearly 340,000 Ohio dual eligibles – people eligible for both Medicare and Medicaid, who are predominantly low-income seniors – just as was done for dual eligibles on Medicaid before the creation of Medicare's private prescription drug program—Medicare Part

D—in 2006. According to the non-partisan CBO, the *Medicare Drug Savings Act* would save more than \$141 billion by helping to responsibly reduce the deficit by ending a special interest giveaway that requires the government to pay a higher rate for prescription drugs.

Ensuring Access to Affordable Healthcare

As Congress works to find better ways to determine Medicare physician payments, Sen. Brown continues to advocate for policies that make sense for providers and beneficiaries. When CMS proposed changes to the Medicare Part D payment for drugs for beneficiaries using hospice and palliative care services, Sen. Brown wrote to the agency, requesting that it delay implementation of the policy and provide more clarity on the issue. After a variety of input from Congress and other stakeholders, CMS issued revised guidance on Part D payment for drugs for beneficiaries enrolled in hospice that will minimize any barriers to beneficiary access to prescription drugs at the end of life or for palliative care.

And after thousands of Medicare beneficiaries signed up for Medicare Advantage (MA) plans in the fall of 2014, expecting their doctors to remain in network, but then lost their doctors for no reason over the next few months, Sen. Brown introduced the *Medicare*



Advantage Participant Bill of Rights. This bill would prevent disruptions of this kind from happening in the future by giving seniors commonsense protections and the information needed to make informed decisions when buying MA plans. Among other things, the *Medicare Advantage Participant Bill of Rights* would prohibit MA plans from dropping providers without cause during the middle of the year, to ensure that enrollees do not lose access to their doctors mid-year. In addition, the bill would require MA plans to finalize their provider networks 60 days in advance of the annual enrollment period, to ensure that enrollees know what providers will be in-network before they sign up. Sen. Brown also wrote to CMS, asking the agency to institute many of these improvements to the program for 2015. At the request of Sen. Brown and his colleagues, the Government Accountability Office (GAO) will be conducting a study of MA plan networks in 2015.

Sen. Brown also believes seniors deserve access to the providers who best fit their needs, including audiologists. Unlike other specialists, audiologists are often unable to provide services to the full extent of their education and licensure because of Medicare's requirement that patients be referred to these specialists by a primary care physician. Sen. Brown introduced the *Direct Access to Audiology Services Act*, which would allow Medicare beneficiaries to go directly to an audiologist for hearing loss care. This would permit audiologists to operate more broadly under Medicare while adhering to the scope of practice allowed by their training and licensing, while also easing the burden on beneficiaries seeking care.

Unfortunately, hospitals are increasingly caring for Medicare beneficiaries on “outpatient observation status” instead of admitting them as inpatients—a billing technicality. Because of this technicality, patients are enduring lengthier hospital stays in observation status and many Medicare beneficiaries and their families are still saddled with insurmountable out-of-pocket costs for stays at skilled nursing facilities (SNF) solely because of the classification of their hospital stay prior to nursing home care. Under current law, Medicare will only cover SNF benefits if the patient had three consecutive days of hospitalization as an inpatient, not counting the day of discharge.

Sen. Brown introduced the *Improving Access to Medicare Coverage Act*, which would correct this billing technicality and provide beneficiaries who need SNF care after their hospitalization a pathway to receive it as a covered Medicare benefit. The Senate Special Committee on Aging held a hearing on this issue and Sen. Brown’s bill in July of 2014.

Throughout 2014, Sen. Brown cosponsored several other pieces of legislation that would help improve the Medicare program, including the *Two Midnight Rule Coordination and Improvement Act*, the *Medicare Access to Rehabilitation Services Act*, the *Home Health Care Planning Improvement Act*, and the *Comprehensive Immunosuppressive Drug Coverage for Kidney Transplant Patients Act*.

Improving Consistency of Care

America’s seniors deserve stable, quality care while maintaining access to their doctors, which is why Sen. Brown joined then-Representative Michael Bilirakis in 2001 in authoring the first bill to fix the Sustainable Growth Rate (SGR) – the current Medicare physician payment system. Sen. Brown has continued to fight for a solution that permanently prevents arbitrary and unfair payment cuts that jeopardize access to care for Medicare patients.

On March 31, 2014, Sen. Brown voted along with the majority of his Senate colleagues to pass the *Protecting Access to Medicare Act of 2014*, a bipartisan, bicameral piece of legislation that will prevent the SGR formula from taking effect for an additional year and help ensure that doctors can continue to treat seniors. President Obama signed the *Protecting Access to Medicare Act of 2014* into law on April 1, 2014.

Mental Health

Expanding access to quality mental health services should be a national priority. Mental health care is an essential component of our health care system, and it is important to ensure that all Americans have access to these essential services.

Ending Discrimination Against those with Mental Illness

The ACA builds on the existing *Mental Health Parity Act* to extend mental health parity protections to more than 62 million Americans. The health law requires all individual and small group insurance plans to cover mental health and substance use disorder services as one of ten essential health benefits. And thanks to the health law, as of January 1, 2014 insurance plans are no longer able to deny coverage to individuals with mental illness, and insurers are unable to use mental illness as a reason to raise anyone’s premiums.

Increasing Access to Mental Health Services

Sen. Brown believes that expanding access to quality mental health services should be a national priority, which is why he cosponsored the *Excellence in Mental Health Act*, which was signed into law in April of 2014. This initiative will improve access to mental health care by establishing Certified Community Behavioral Health Clinics that would operate and receive financial benefits similar to Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHC), allowing them to reach upward of 1.5 million Americans living with mental illness who currently do not have ready and affordable mental health care.

Caring for the mental health needs of our children is also a crucial public health issue, as one in five youth in the United States experience mental illness, and 70 percent of adolescents with mental health problems do not receive care. During the 113th Congress, Sen. Brown was an original cosponsor of the *Mental Health in Schools Act*, which would expand access to mental health services in schools through a grant program to support schools that work with community-based organizations to expand student access to mental health services. The grant program would also provide assistance for schools to train staff, volunteers, families, and other members of the community to recognize the signs of behavioral health problems in students and refer them for appropriate services.

Sen. Brown is also working to make it easier for Ohio's seniors to access the care of psychologists, who already deliver almost half of the psychotherapy services to Medicare beneficiaries in the hospital outpatient setting, and more than 70 percent of the psychotherapy services in the hospital inpatient, partial hospital, and residential care settings. He introduced the *Medicare Mental Health Access Act*, which would allow psychologists to operate independently in all relevant Medicare settings – just as they can in the private insurance market. This legislation would help ensure that seniors have increased access to mental health services.

Older Americans

One of Sen. Brown's highest priorities is to protect and strengthen programs for America's seniors. For too long, older Americans who spent their working years paying taxes and playing by the rules have not achieved the financial security in retirement that they deserve. Instead, many have been forced to move out of life-long family homes and into nursing facilities prematurely, deplete their assets to gain Medicaid eligibility, or skip doses of expensive medicines.

Protecting Medicare

Throughout the 113th Congress, many other members of Congress have proposed other ways to undermine Medicare's guaranteed benefits. Some want to raise the eligibility age for seniors to receive Medicare. Sen. Brown opposes efforts to increase the eligibility age; he believes we can increase Medicare's solvency while ensuring that it continues to serve older Americans without cutting benefits or raising the eligibility age.

Reauthorizing Programs for Older Americans

In 2014, Sen. Brown was a proud co-sponsor of legislation that would reauthorize the *Older American's Act* (OAA). The OAA provides funding for vital health services and supports volunteer programs that enable seniors to remain active and engaged in their local communities. It also enables seniors to receive in-home meals, provides transportation to those who would not otherwise be able to leave their homes, and ensures older Americans receive adequate social and nutrition services. In addition to co-sponsoring the OAA Reauthorization in 2014, Sen. Brown signed on to a letter to the President in support of continued funding of existing Senior Volunteer Programs in the future.

Fighting Alzheimer's Disease

Every 67 seconds, somebody in the U.S. is diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease. As the nation's sixth leading cause of death, Alzheimer's disease affects more than 5.4 million Americans. Sen. Brown believes that the prevention and treatment of Alzheimer's should be a national priority, which is why he voted for the *National Alzheimer's Project Act* (NAPA) in 2011. Sen. Brown continues to support the goals of NAPA, which is why he cosponsored the *Alzheimer's Accountability Act* in 2014. This legislation would require the National Institutes of Health (NIH) to specify the resources it needs to meet the goals of the National Alzheimer's Project and make Alzheimer's prevention and treatment a reality.

Sen. Brown is also committed to ensuring Alzheimer's receives the funding necessary to support affected individuals as well as their caregivers, which is why he signed onto a Senate letter requesting funding to support Alzheimer's research and caregiver programs. In addition, Sen. Brown was an original cosponsor of the *Health Outcomes, Planning, and Education for Alzheimer's (HOPE) Act*, which would have provided for comprehensive Alzheimer's disease diagnosis and services to help patients and their families access appropriate care planning.

Public Health

Public health is the health of a population as a whole, promoted by disease prevention and healthy lifestyles. It is the idea that, through organized efforts and effective disease prevention, a population can prolong life and promote health as a whole.

Confirming Our Nation's Public Health Spokesperson

The U.S. Surgeon General is the leading spokesperson on matters of public health for the U.S. Recognizing the importance of this position, Sen Brown wrote a letter to President Obama asking him to consider Dr. Vivek Murthy for the Surgeon General position in August of 2013. Dr. Murthy is an accomplished and respected medical professional, who at the time served as the Hospitalist Attending Physician at Brigham and Women's Hospital in Boston, where he was honored in 2012 with the Faculty Mentor Award. In November 2013, President Obama nominated Dr. Murthy to be Surgeon General. Over a year later and despite heavy opposition from Republicans and the National Rifle Association, Dr. Murthy was finally confirmed as Surgeon General on December 15, 2014. Murthy's extensive experience as an entrepreneur, health professional, and public health advocate position him as an exceptionally well-qualified candidate for Surgeon General.

Leading the Fight Against Chronic Diseases

According to the CDC, there has been a dramatic increase in obesity in the U.S. over the past 20 years. Currently, more than one-third of U.S. adults are considered obese and 17 percent of children are obese. An increasing number of Americans are suffering from obesity-related health problems such as diabetes and heart disease, which cause more than \$147 billion in medical costs per year. Over 25 million Americans suffer from diabetes, and this number has been growing rapidly in recent years, with 79 million Americans considered pre-diabetic. Diabetes patients alone account for nearly one-third of all Medicare spending.

Sen. Brown has long supported properly funding diabetes research at the National Institutes of Health (NIH) and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), including the Special Diabetes Program (SDP), which funds much-needed research on the prevention and cure for diabetes. In spring 2014, Sen. Brown joined his Senate colleagues in sending a letter to the Senate's Majority and Minority leaders asking for continued support of the SDP, which has already contributed significant advances in diabetes research. As a result, Congress extended funding to the SDP and the program will remain operational through September 30, 2015.

Also in 2014, Brown cosponsored the *National Diabetes Clinical Care Commission Act*, which would establish a public-private commission comprised of experts in diabetes research and treatment dedicated to identifying gaps in existing clinical care and provide guidance for new initiatives. The bill would also direct the commission to report its recommendations for improvements in patient care and outcomes to HHS.

The health reform law also included provisions to help reduce obesity and combat health problems caused by obesity. For instance, insurance plans are now required to cover preventive health services, which include obesity screenings (a physician's exam as well as a body-mass index measurement) and nutritional counseling – which we know to be a vital part of obesity prevention. The law also requires vending machines and chain restaurants with more than 20 locations to provide consumers with caloric and nutritional information about the items they serve. Finally, the ACA established the Prevention and Public Health Fund, which provides a dedicated, stable funding stream for prevention, wellness, and public health activities.

Recognizing the Importance of Funding Public Health Initiatives

Despite staggeringly high health care costs, the U.S. lags behind other developed countries in a number of ways. One major contributing factor to this troubling discrepancy is our lifestyle and habits. The current obesity and diabetes epidemics, for instance, can be attributed in large part to sedentary lifestyles and unhealthy diets. And it is estimated that lifestyle factors are responsible for at least 25 percent of American employers' medical costs. In order to raise public awareness surrounding the importance of public health, Sen. Brown cosponsored a Resolution supporting the goals and ideas of National Public Health week in April 2014.

The ACA's Prevention and Public Health Fund is already working to reduce tobacco use, combat obesity and heart disease, and build healthier communities. Unfortunately, some in Congress repeatedly try to underfund or repeal the fund. Sen. Brown supported the creation of the fund and will fight to oppose efforts to defend this critical funding source that is helping to combat the growing health problems our country faces and lower health care costs.

Combating Antibiotic Resistance



In 2013, the CDC published a report on antibiotic resistance. “*Antibiotic Resistance Threats in the United States, 2013*,” conservatively estimated that more than two million people in the U.S. are sickened each year with antibiotic-resistant infections – resulting in at least 23,000 deaths a year. This type of a public health crisis requires action to strengthen the federal response to antimicrobial resistance, which is why Sen. Brown introduced the *Strategies to Address Antimicrobial Resistance (STAAR) Act*.

The STAAR Act seeks to strengthen the federal response to antibiotic resistance by: 1) reauthorizing the Interagency Task Force on Antimicrobial Resistance (ITFAR) and providing it with the leadership necessary to execute a coordinated federal response to antimicrobial resistance; 2) updating ITFAR’s Public Health Plan to include measurement benchmarks; 3) intensifying and expanding current efforts to collect antimicrobial resistance and antibiotic use data; 4) authorizing the use of grants to study the development and implementation of antimicrobial stewardship programs aimed at expanding efforts to encourage appropriate use of antibiotics; and 5) developing and testing quality measures on antimicrobial use.

In early September, the President’s Council of Advisors on Science and Technology (PCAST) released a report offering recommendations to the federal government to help strengthen and improve the U.S. response to antibiotic resistance and manage the rise of superbugs, underscoring the need for the STAAR Act. After President Obama issued an Executive Order on Combating Antibiotic Resistance, Sen. Brown wrote letters recommending two Ohio experts in the field to serve on the Administration’s new Antibiotic Resistance Council.

Reproductive Rights

Throughout the past several years, Ohio and many other states have been subjected to insidious efforts directed at whittling away at women’s reproductive rights. Sen. Brown has and will continue to work with colleagues in Congress to slow this tide by supporting legislation that protects a woman’s right to make her own health decisions and take charge of her reproductive health.

Standing Up for Women



Sen. Brown is opposed to attempts made by states and other members of Congress to inappropriately restrict access to abortion and family planning services. A woman's decision to terminate a pregnancy is never an easy one, but it should be a private decision between the woman and her doctor, protected by the constitutional right to privacy.

In 2014, Sen. Brown cosponsored the *Women's Health Protection Act*, which would create federal protections against state restrictions that fail to protect women's health and intrude upon personal decision-making. This bill would protect a woman's constitutional right to access safe and legal abortion services regardless of the state in which she lives.

Keeping Corporations Out of Personal Health Care Decisions

In July 2014, the Supreme Court ruling in *Burwell v. Hobby Lobby* denied women's rights to preventive, essential health benefits. Through its decision, the Court opened the door for corporations to make personal health care decisions for their female employees and discriminate against a woman's right to comprehensive health care.

Sen. Brown is committed to protecting women's health and access to comprehensive coverage, which is why he joined 18 other Democratic Senators in filing an Amicus Brief to weigh in on the Hobby Lobby case in support of women's access to comprehensive health coverage before the Court considered the case.

After the Supreme Court's decision, Sen. Brown cosponsored the *Protect Women's Health From Corporate Interference Act*, along with 37 of his Senate colleagues. The *Protect Women's Health From Corporate Interference Act* would have prohibited employers from denying coverage of any specific health care item or service guaranteed under federal law, including contraceptive coverage. It would ensure that all employees affected by the Hobby Lobby decision maintain access to comprehensive women's preventive services, as well as coverage of all other health services required under federal law.

Nicknamed the "*Not My Boss' Business Act*," this legislation would restore the original legal standard that guarantees access to cost-free women's health coverage through employment-based insurance plans. Unfortunately, this bill failed to pass in 2014.

Ensuring Access to Contraceptive Services

Family planning is an essential component of women's preventive health care. It includes a range of vital services, such as counseling; contraceptive services; STI education, testing, and prevention; breast and cervical cancer screenings; pregnancy testing and care; and contraception. For many women, these services are prohibitively expensive. Approximately 36 million women in the U.S. alone were in need of contraceptive services in 2008, but 40 percent had no insurance coverage to help cover the costs.

The ACA expanded access to affordable preventive health services, including well-woman visits, STI counseling, contraception counseling, breastfeeding support, and domestic violence screenings, for 47 million women. It has also provided insured women who wish to use contraception access to affordable contraception as part of their personal family planning tools.

Despite the protections afforded by the health reform law, women still have trouble accessing affordable birth control. This is why Sen. Brown cosponsored the *Access to Birth Control Act*. This bill would require pharmacies to provide access to legal pharmaceuticals, even if one of their pharmacists refuses to fill the prescription. This legislation responds to reports of pharmacists refusing to fill women's prescriptions for legal contraception. Regardless of an individual pharmacist's right or choice to refuse filling the prescription, the pharmacies - the businesses - should be required to provide a woman with access to legal forms of birth control.

Protecting the Rights of American Women Serving Abroad

Sen. Brown believes that women who have chosen to dedicate themselves to service, through either the Peace Corps or through the Armed Services, should have equal access to the protections afforded to all other Americans, which is why he cosponsored the *Peace Corps Equity Act* and the *Access to Contraception for Women Servicemembers and Dependents Act*.

The *Peace Corps Equity Act* would ensure that Peace Corps volunteers working abroad have the same access to abortion services as regular employees of the Peace Corps. The *Access to Contraception for Women Servicemembers and Dependents Act* would bring TRICARE's contraceptive coverage policies in line with other employer-based insurance plans to ensure that all servicemembers and their dependents who rely on the military health care system have comprehensive contraceptive coverage and family planning counselling.

Research and Development

The National Institutes of Health (NIH) is the cornerstone of medical advancement and innovation in the U.S., financing lifesaving research to improve the health and well-being of all Americans. Sen. Brown is highly supportive of the NIH's mission and heartened by its successes. As such, he is concerned that NIH funding has taken a grave hit given budget cuts over the last few years and the effects of sequestration, and supports a full restoration of funding to the NIH and other government agencies participating in research essential for the health of Americans.

Predictable and Sustainable Funding

More than half of all basic scientific research was funded by the federal government in 2011. Despite the fact that the U.S. research community relies on these government agencies for funding opportunities, federal funding for research has substantially decreased over the past 50 years. Ohio – home to 2,564 bioscience companies – has been seriously affected by these cuts to research funding. Not only are these cuts stifling innovation and research, they are hurting job creation and may have a lasting effect on the future workforce of medical researchers.

Sen. Brown strongly supports ample funding for biomedical research, which is why he signed Sens. Casey and Burr's 2015 NIH letter to the Appropriations Committee. It is important for

Congress to continue to invest in biomedical research to ensure that Americans can reap the benefits of breakthrough research performed by the world's finest scientific and medical minds.

This lack of funding will have grave consequences on the future of American innovation, job creation and health, which is why Sen. Brown cosponsored the *American Cures Act*, a bill that would provide predictable and sustainable funding for biomedical research. This legislation would help reinforce America's global competitiveness and reputation as a leader in innovation and discovery by augmenting existing federally funded biomedical research programs with a steady, incremental increase of five percent per year to support the research needs of four agencies: NIH, CDC, Department of Defense's (DOD) Health Program and the Department of Veterans Affairs' (VA) Medical and Prosthetics Research Program.

Championing Rare Diseases

There are a combined 7,000 rare diseases that affect nearly 30 million Americans. More than half of these Americans are children, and many of these rare diseases are serious and life-threatening. Because these diseases are rare, patients often encounter delays and obstacles obtaining an accurate diagnosis, limited treatment options, and difficulty finding physicians or treatment centers with expertise in their diseases.

In January 2014, Sen. Brown introduced a resolution recognizing the last day of February as "National Rare Disease Day" to raise awareness of, and provide support for, the 30 million Americans living with a rare and potentially life-threatening disease or disorder. This Resolution passed the Senate unanimously.

He also cosponsored the *MD-CARE Act*, which would authorize and expanded activities related to muscular dystrophy research and treatment options at the NIH and the CDC. Past authorizations of MD-CARE legislation have helped increase the average lifespan of patients, improved clinical care, and helped shape a growing field of potential therapies.

Technology and Biotech

Of the many challenges facing our nation's health care system, a lack of interoperable information technology (IT) and electronic medical records ranks as one of the more serious problems. Continued reliance on paper files and handwritten charts contributes to preventable medical errors and high administrative costs. Sen. Brown encourages efforts to improve and encourage the development of our nation's health IT systems and use.

Building and Improving the Nation's Health IT Infrastructure

In 2009, the *American Recovery and Reinvestment Act* created a Medicare and Medicaid Electronic Health Record (EHR) bonus payment system to reward providers who adopt and use electronic medical records. That law also provided over \$25 billion for health IT activities, including grants for health IT workforce training, health IT research, and state-based health information network exchanges.

Sen. Brown has been active in the rollout of the EHR program, and he is committed to getting our nation's health care systems to adopt and utilize electronic medical records. However, he is

also dedicated to improving the system so that it works for all providers and sites of service. Both Congress and CMS have acknowledged that pathologists face significant barriers in meeting the current requirements under the EHR program, which is why he led a letter to CMS in 2014, requesting the agency to grant pathologists a 5-year exemption from the program. He also supported the *Behavioral Health Information Technology Act*, which would make behavioral health, mental health, and substance abuse professionals and facilities eligible for health information technology assistance.

Ensuring Safe and Accurate Technologies

Laboratory Developed Tests (LDTs) are diagnostic tests developed by laboratories which have historically been used for low-risk diagnostics or to test for rare diseases. LDTs are currently regulated by CMS and are not required to go through the same pre-market review as other diagnostics. This is because LDTs have historically been simple, well-understood pathology tests. However, LDTs have become much more sophisticated and today's tests have the potential to harm patients through false diagnoses.

In response to growing concern over the accuracy of LDTs leading up to 2014, Sen. Brown wrote to the FDA, urging the Agency to regulate these tests to ensure safety and accuracy. The FDA has since developed regulations to ensure that LDTs are safe and effective for patient use, which must now be reviewed by OMB.

Tobacco

Tobacco use and abuse is a serious economic and public health issue for Ohio and the nation. We already know that smoking traditional tobacco products is dangerous. One in every five deaths in Ohio is caused by tobacco use. New to the tobacco conversation are e-cigarettes or “e-cigs,” an alternative to tobacco cigarettes designed to deliver nicotine or other substances in the form of a vapor. Sen. Brown is dedicated to minimizing the potential risks of and establishing stringent safety and health standards for tobacco products, including premium cigars and e-cigs.



Regulation of E-Cigs

Although the data on electronic cigarettes is not yet conclusive, FDA lab tests in 2009 showed that the vapor from some electronic cigarettes may also contain carcinogens. There is no data to support the conclusion that electronic cigarettes are a safer alternative to smoking.

Concerned about the potential adverse health consequences of e-cigs and related products, Sen. Brown has urged the FDA and OMB to do everything in its power to expand its oversight of Big Tobacco in order to protect consumers from the dangers of e-cigs and ensure they aren't being marketed to children. The *Family Smoking Prevention and Tobacco Control Act* gave the FDA

direct authority to begin oversight of cigarettes and smokeless tobacco, but required FDA to promulgate regulations to assert similar authority over all tobacco products. In 2014, Sen. Brown met with and wrote to FDA Commissioner Margaret Hamburg, and wrote to President Obama and OMB Director Shaun Donovan, encouraging the Administration to move quickly to write and review these regulations, making them as strong as possible.

Sen. Brown also signed on to letters to the Senate Rules Committee and Senate Leadership, pushing for a ban on e-cigs on Capitol grounds. He supported efforts to ban the use of e-cigs on planes and to restrict flavors of liquid nicotine – particularly those flavors most attractive to children that could draw them to the products. And he wrote to the FDA expressing concerns over the agency’s methods for evaluating the cost-benefit analysis of e-cig products, encouraging the FDA to take a more scientific approach to these products and its methodologies.

Recognizing that the media also has a major influence on American habits, Sen. Brown also signed on to letters to the FTC, NBC, and Hollywood Foreign Press to decry the prominent placement of e-cigs in the Golden Globes Awards show and other popular TV shows and advertisements.

Protecting our Youth

E-cig makers have utilized ads on the television and radio, as well as the use of celebrity sponsors, to glamorize their products. Unchecked by regulation, e-cig use has doubled among middle and high school children in 2013 alone, according to a recent report by the CDC. The CDC’s study also suggests that e-cigs are a gateway to traditional smoking, citing that more than 76 percent of children who used e-cigs also smoked conventional cigarettes within 30 days.

On February 26, 2014, Sen. Brown helped introduce legislation to prohibit the advertisement, promotion, or marketing of e-cigarettes in a manner that is known, or should be known, to increase the use of e-cigarettes by children under the age of 18. A violation would constitute an unfair or deceptive act or practice under the *Federal Trade Commission (FTA) Act*.

The *Protecting Children from Electronic Cigarette Advertising Act* would also establish civil penalties available to states, and empower the FTC to work with states attorneys general to enforce the ban. He also signed on to a letter to the Administration on the importance of including advertising restrictions in its deeming regulations, emphasizing that youth do not understand that e-cigs contain addictive substances.

In November, Sen. Brown sent a letter to the President of the Boy Scouts of America, Secretary Robert Gates, urging him to reconsider the organization’s partnership with the “Right Decisions Right Now” (RDRN) youth tobacco prevention program, funded by the R.J. Reynolds Tobacco Company. Sen. Brown also cosponsored the *Child Nicotine Poisoning Prevention Act*, which would give the Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) the authority and direction to issue rules requiring safer, child-resistant packaging for liquid nicotine products within one year of passage.

Tobacco and Servicemembers

A 2008 Department of Defense study found that the smoking rate among all branches of the military was 30.6 percent, compared to 20.6 percent among adults in the general U.S. population.

Additionally, 33 percent of surveyed active-duty personnel said that the availability of cigarettes at many places on installations made it easier to smoke.

Sen. Brown is dedicated to doing everything in his capacity to address this issue for our military men and women, like making the push for a prohibition on the sale of tobacco products on military bases. In a March letter to U.S. Navy Secretary Ray Mabus, Sen. Brown urged the Department to prohibit the sale of tobacco products aboard naval bases and ships, and in October, Sen. Brown urged all branches of the Armed Services to ban the sale of tobacco on bases.

Encouraging Healthy Habits

January 2014 marked the 50th Anniversary of the Surgeon General's Report on Smoking and Health that first linked smoking with lung cancer and heart disease. In recognition of that report and the subsequent efforts nationwide at reducing smoking related disease and death, Sen. Brown joined with his colleagues to introduce a Resolution to mark the anniversary. Among other things, the Resolution recognizes the significant contributions of this report in reducing the public health burden of tobacco use, and express support for ending tobacco-related death and disease.

In February 2014, CVS Pharmacies (now CVS Health) announced that it would end the sale of all tobacco products – including e-cigs – at its stores. As a follow up to this landmark announcement, Sen. Brown joined his colleagues in letters to Walgreens, Rite Aid, Walmart, and other chain pharmacies, touting CVS's decision to stop selling tobacco products and urging them to do the same.

Sen. Brown has applied continuous pressure to Big Tobacco wherever possible in answer to the constant shifting of the industry and its products to avoid regulation. He is dedicated to doing everything in his power to protect the public from tobacco.

Workforce



Doctors, nurses, direct support professionals, and other health care providers are the backbone of our nation's healthcare system. We must take a comprehensive approach to tackling workforce shortage issues in order to expand access to high quality health care services for all Americans. This is especially important as our aging population grows, and increasing numbers of Americans develop serious or life-threatening illnesses.

Recognizing our Healthcare Workforce

Sen. Brown introduced a Resolution designating the week of September 7, 2014, as "National Direct Support Professionals Recognition Week." This resolution is designed to honor and thank our DSPs for their service, hard work, and care of our most vulnerable citizens.

Educating the Next Generation of Health Professionals

In an effort to control spending, the *Balanced Budget Act of 1997* capped the number of graduate medical student residency slots that could be reimbursed by Medicare. Over the past 13 years, this cap has remained the same, while the need for trained physicians has increased, thereby creating a shortage of qualified physicians.

Sen. Brown voted for the ACA, which is improving workforce training and development and increasing the diversity of our nation's health care workforce. The ACA will help tackle the looming physician shortage by redistributing unfilled graduate medical education (GME) slots to where they are most needed, giving priority to hospitals that train primary care residents in rural and underserved regions. Despite members of Congress who have proposed reducing Medicare funding for GME, Sen. Brown is committed to ensuring there is adequate funding for GME. Reducing Medicare GME funding may save money in the short-term, but will have devastating long-term effects on teaching hospitals and patients by reducing access to health care services.

In addition, the health reform law has established a public health workforce loan repayment program that will help increase the number of grant, loan, and scholarship opportunities across the country. The public health workforce loan repayment program pays a portion of an individual's school loans for each year of obligated service in an area of need.

Title VII of the *Public Health Service Act* (PHSA) funds workforce development for health professionals by providing grants, scholarships, and student loan repayment. These funds are essential to primary care, especially in rural or otherwise underserved areas. Throughout his career, Sen. Brown has been a strong supporter of providing full funding for programs such as those under Titles VII of the PHSA. He believes it is essential to help the nation bolster its health care workforce, which is why he signed onto Sen. Jack Reed's letter calling for \$280 million in funding for Title VII Health Professions programs as part of the FY15 appropriations process.

Protecting our Healthcare Workforce

Research shows that insufficient nurse staffing contributes to nearly 25 percent of all unexpected incidents that lead to the death or injury of hospitalized patients. In 2014, Sen. Brown cosponsored both the *Registered Nurse Safe Staffing and Quality Care Act* and the *Nurse Staffing Standards for Patient Safety Act* to support the critical role in our health care system.

The *Registered Nurse Safe Staffing and Quality Care Act* would mandate that hospitals keep an ample number of registered nurses on call at all times to ensure quality patient care. Additionally, this legislation would make information regarding nurse staffing available to the public, allowing consumers to make well-informed decisions about where to seek health care. The *Nurse Staffing Standards for Patient Safety Act* would require hospitals to develop nurse staffing plans to meet specified nurse-to-patient ratios. These plans would identify and establish guidelines to ensure the hospital meets nursing care requirements to satisfy patient need, not just required minimums.

Keeping our Workers Healthy

In 1978, Congress passed the *Pregnancy Discrimination Act* (PDA) to ensure employers could not discriminate against pregnant workers. However, this law fails to explicitly require employers to modify working conditions for pregnant workers. In October 2014, the Supreme Court heard oral arguments in *Young v. UPS*, a case involving the PDA. Ms. Young was employed as a UPS driver when she became pregnant. Following her doctor's recommendations, she asked her employer to be placed on light-work duty that would keep her from lifting heavy items. When her bosses denied her request, Ms. Young sued UPS under the PDA.

Unfortunately, there have been too many instances, similar to Ms. Young's story, where pregnant workers have been fired because they were physically unable to carry heavy boxes or climb high ladders. It is unfair and unreasonable to expect pregnant women to be able to perform the strenuous work that they were capable doing of prior to pregnancy. Prior to the *Young v. UPS* case, Sen. Brown signed onto a legal brief expressing support for Ms. Young's claims, arguing that she has standing to sue UPS under the PDA which is intended to protect pregnant workers from seeing a change in job status due to pregnancy.

From fair pay to safe working conditions, female employees deserve equal rights in the workplace. This is why Sen. Brown cosponsored *Pregnant Workers Fairness Act*, which would require employers to make commonsense adjustments for pregnant employees in the workplace. This legislation would be a step in the right direction for protecting female workers like Ms. Young, and ensuring that their job and health will not be jeopardized during pregnancy.

In addition to protecting female workers, Sen. Brown is fighting to safeguard the health and safety of all workers across America. We know that a healthy and safe workplace leads to a more productive and capable American workforce, which is why Sen. Brown made a commitment in 2014 to fight for funding for new buildings for the CDC's National Institute for Occupational Health and Safety (NIOSH) center in Cincinnati, Ohio. He has both written to and held conversations with HHS Secretary Burwell and OMB Director Donovan on the importance of this funding, which he hopes to secure for FY16.

NIOSH's mission is to "prevent work-related injury, illness, and death." In Cincinnati, NIOSH research and support activities are located on two separate campuses, approximately eight miles apart. Both campuses are comprised of aging 1950's-era facilities that are in varying states of disrepair, and are increasingly deficient in both space configuration and building systems. Because of this, scientific collaboration is limited and NIOSH's cutting-edge scientific research is inhibited. Upgrading these facilities is of paramount importance, and would allow NIOSH to undertake the cutting-edge scientific research that forms the core of its public-health mission.

Working to Revitalize Our Neighborhoods

In January, Sen. Brown and 32 of his colleagues urged Mel Watt, the Director of the Federal Housing Finance Agency (FHFA), to increase resources for affordable housing by ending the suspension of contributions to the National Housing Trust Fund (NHTF) and the Capital Magnet Fund (CMF). In December, Director Watt announced that FHFA would direct funds to the NHTF.

Following August's record-setting \$16.65 billion settlement between Bank of America and the U.S. Department of Justice to resolve widespread homeowner abuses, Sens. Brown and Portman sent a letter to Bank of America, urging the company to direct part of the settlement's consumer relief funds to revitalize Ohio neighborhoods. In the letter, Sens. Brown and Portman outlined the devastating impact the housing crisis had on Ohio communities and the role these funds would play in revitalizing Ohio's hardest hit areas through blight elimination, home rehabilitation, and foreclosure prevention. Their letter urged Bank of America to work with Ohio's community organizations that have led neighborhood stabilization efforts in their communities.

Transportation and Infrastructure

Realizing that a strong infrastructure is the foundation for job creation and economic development, Sen. Brown continues to be a vocal advocate for investing in our nation's infrastructure to create jobs, grow the middle class, and promote our nation's long-term economic growth. Ohio's central location, access to markets, and system of highways, ports, rails, and airports has long supported the state's economic growth and helped ensure a leading role in the logistics industry. A lack of investment in our infrastructure cedes a competitive advantage to emerging economies like China, imperils public health and safety, and harms our environment.

Investing in Roads and Bridges

Continued underinvestment in Ohio's roads and bridges leads to traffic jams, unsafe roads and bridges, and lost business productivity. These investments are especially critical to the construction industry, where unemployment rates still outpace those of the overall working population.

According to the Federal Highway Administration, for every \$1 billion spent on highway and bridge construction, nearly 28,000 jobs are created. These include direct jobs involved in construction work, indirect jobs created by the purchase of materials for projects, and induced jobs supported by new consumer spending when Americans go back to work.



Additionally, infrastructure investments including transportation improvements and ensuring clean, affordable water help attract economic development. According to the American Society of Civil Engineers, over the coming years there is a \$1.6 trillion shortfall in our infrastructure investments that could lead to substantial costs in lost productivity, reduced trade, and job loss. And with more than nine percent of Ohio's bridges having been deemed structurally deficient, it is clear that protecting public safety is an important

component of our transportation priorities.¹

In 2014, Sen. Brown supported efforts to pass a long-term highway and transit reauthorization that would address the continued shortfall in the Highway Trust Fund while also increasing funding for public transportation, bicycle trails, and pedestrian friendly investments. Unfortunately, Congress passed another short-term extension; Sen. Brown will continue to push for a robust highway bill in 2015.

Building on Ohio's Aviation Heritage

As the birthplace of aviation, Ohio has a long history with all things flight-related. Sen. Brown has been active in ensuring that our commercial airports help Ohio residents and business access the world. In that regard, Sen. Brown continued his efforts to ensure that Ohioans are represented on the board of the Cincinnati-Northern Kentucky Airport. Sen. Brown has long called on local

¹ <http://t4america.org/docs/bridgereport2013/2013BridgeReport.pdf>

officeholders in Kentucky to ensure that the interests of Cincinnati and the local business community are represented in Board actions.

Sen. Brown continued to work with the Ohio stakeholders to make the state a hub for safely integrating unmanned aerial systems into the nation's airspace. Sen. Brown led a letter of the Ohio delegation supporting efforts by a consortium of colleges and universities, including The Ohio State University and Sinclair Community College State, to establish a Federal Aviation Administration UAS Center of Excellence. Sen. Brown has continued his work with Sinclair Community College on aviation technology programs and with the Ohio Aerospace Institute to bolster one of the state's top industries.

Continuing his efforts to help Ohio airports upgrade and modernize, Sen. Brown also announced nearly \$30 million in discretionary Airport Improvement Program grants to more than more than 65 different airports and airfields across the state. These federal funds will make county airports safer and increase economic development opportunities.

Investing in Railroads

Sen. Brown has continued to work with Ohio's short line and Class-A railroads to ensure that shippers receive fair rates and on-time railroad service. He fought for a *Recovery Act* grant for CSX's National Gateway project in North Baltimore, Ohio which helped create more than 250 jobs in Wood County through the construction of a multimodal facility. It has been estimated that the intermodal terminal and other investments made in the project have reduced the time it takes to ship appliances made by Whirlpool in Findlay from one week to two days. Additionally, investments in Norfolk Southern's Heartland Corridor at Rickenbacker Airport outside of Columbus, funded by both the *Recovery Act* and Federal Highway Administration, led to the arrival of the first double-stack trains in central Ohio. Sen. Brown fought to ensure that the Rickenbacker Project was a recipient of the highly competitive U.S. Department of Transportation TIGER grant program.

Yet, as important as freight railroads are to the state, Sen. Brown has fought for "quiet zone" designations where railroads go through residential communities and to ensure that Amtrak passengers are not needlessly delayed by freight railroads.

Reinvesting in Ohio's Maritime Heritage

Ohio's ports have long played a critical role in our heavy industries and in shipping our raw materials and grains to the world. Yet, years of sediment buildup in shipping channels has made it difficult for ships to maneuver. Sen. Brown's proposed solution to this problem would be to increase the amount of funding from the Harbor Maintenance Trust Fund into our nation's ports. Currently, a small fee is collected on cargo that comes into port; this fee is deposited into the Trust Fund and revenues are used to dredge shipping panels or improve port operations. However, despite overwhelming need, current and past Administrations have declined to spend these funds on port maintenance. That's why Sen. Brown has been a longtime supporter of the *Harbor Maintenance Act* which is supported by Ohio's ports and shippers.

In 2014, Sen. Brown, along with his Great Lakes colleagues, were successful in their efforts to increase funding for dredging in the Great Lakes via amendments included in the *Water Resources*

Reform and Development Act of 2014. The law includes provisions that will reduce the dredging backlog by increasing the amount spent on harbor and port maintenance and ensure that the Great Lakes would receive 20 percent of Harbor Maintenance funds above 2012 levels. Sen. Brown worked with the Ports of Cleveland and Toledo on this important legislative improvement.

Sen. Brown also introduced a bipartisan bill to allow the steam-powered paddlewheeler the *Delta Queen* to once again travel the nation's rivers on overnight trips. Sen. Brown was able to secure the support of the Senate Commerce Committee for this legislation, but Senate passage of the bill was ultimately blocked.

Improving Motorcoach Safety

After five years of bipartisan work, 2012 saw the passage of Sen. Brown's *Motorcoach Enhanced Safety Act* into law. Sen. Brown first introduced the following a 2007 crash of a tour bus carrying 33 Bluffton University baseball players that claimed seven lives. The bill, supported by passenger safety advocates as well as Greyhound, will ensure better trained drivers and seatbelts, stronger windows and more protective roofs on tour buses. In the fall of 2013, the Department of Transportation (DOT) announced that, for the first time, beginning in 2017 all new tour buses will be required to have seatbelts. This was a key tenant of Sen. Brown's bill and is the first of many new safety improvements that will result because of his bill.

However, Sen. Brown has been dogged in his efforts to ensure that DOT is issuing other new motorcoach safety standards in a timely manner and that these standards adequately protect passengers.

Working with Community Stakeholders in Findlay and Ottawa

Following 2007's devastating flood of the Blanchard River in Findlay and Ottawa, Sen. Brown has worked with community stakeholders, local businesses, and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to determine the best way to prevent future flooding events. The leadership of the local community has resulted in the ongoing work to determine the best path forward to deal with the Blanchard River. Sen. Brown has worked on a bipartisan basis with other members of the Ohio congressional delegation to accelerate work by the USACE on the project and to ensure that it receives the prioritization it deserves.

Additionally, Sen. Brown introduced a bipartisan amendment with Senator Lindsey Graham of South Carolina to the *Water Resources Development Act of 2013* to ensure that projects like the Blanchard River Flood Management Project are eligible to receive continued federal funding upon the completion of a "Chief's Report." Without this provision, worthy projects—like in Findlay and Ottawa—could have to wait years for congressional approval, putting local communities in harm's way and potentially adding millions in construction costs. This provision was included in the *Water Resources Reform and Development Act of 2014*.

Defense, Military, and Homeland Security

Sen. Brown's first priority is to support our troops and their families. He believes this is a responsibility shared by all Americans. We need to ensure that our troops receive the support and resources necessary to defend and maintain our country's security. Sen. Brown continues to fight for all Ohioans who serve from providing top-of-the-line equipment and vehicles, to ensuring fair compensation for servicemembers and easing the transition to from active duty to civilian life. This ensures the brave men and women receive the materials, support, and benefits they have earned.

Fighting for Ohio Defense Installations and Defense Manufacturing Jobs

Protecting Ohio's Military Manufacturing Jobs

Sen. Brown is a strong supporter of Ohio's manufacturing industry and sees the state's military assets as critical to the nation's national security and Ohio's economy. That is why he supported legislation to ensure that the Joint Systems Manufacturing Center in Lima would receive \$120 million in funding for the Abrams Tank program. He is also extremely supportive of the work done on the Stryker Vehicle and backed the approximately \$79 million in funding to support Stryker production and development. Sen. Brown believes that this critical production performed at Lima must endure.



Ensuring that our domestic defense supply chain is strong remains one of Sen. Brown's top priorities. He has advocated for strong funding to improve domestic production capabilities and to enhance improvements to specialty metals used for aerospace applications. Ohio is home to several industries that directly support the warfighter effort and Sen. Brown recognizes the importance of enhancing our domestic capabilities. He also realizes the importance of ensuring that all aspects of the defense supply

chain can be monitored during the life cycle of each piece of equipment. Sen. Brown urged specific language to allow the Department of Defense (DOD) to track each asset be included in legislation to ensure accountability throughout the supply chain.

Sen. Brown knows that fair and open competition that supports the needs of the DOD means taxpayers receive the best deal. For this reason, he pushed to ensure that DOD and the Navy utilize the Tire Successor Initiative, which has lowered costs and streamlined the process of procuring tires for the warfighter.

Strengthening Ohio's Military Bases

Ohio possesses a unique mix of active, reserve, and Guard units that make our state critical to America's defense. Sen. Brown understands the importance of Ohio's military epicenters in protecting the state and the nation. With that in mind, he carried out several initiatives in 2014 to promote growth at Ohio's bases while protecting Ohio military jobs.

Fighting for Rickenbacker

Sen. Brown sent a letter to Secretary of the Air Force Deborah Lee James expressing his strong support to locate the KC-46A "Pegasus" tanker at Rickenbacker Air Guard Station. Sen. Brown believes that Rickenbacker is the ideal location for this new National Guard mission.

Standing up for Youngstown Air Reserve Station



In a recent trip to Youngstown Air Reserve Station, Sen. Brown discussed the critical role that the 910th plays in our national defense. He has discussed with Air Force Secretary James the importance of ensuring that the C-130H airframe is maintained and upgraded to meet domestic and international regulations. This ensures the 910th continues to surpass mission goals.

Protecting Critical Work at Wright-Patterson

Sen. Brown continues to speak to Secretary James about the critical research and development programs at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base. Sen. Brown urged additional funding for Wright-Patterson's development of next-generation technologies that support regional industry and economic development. Sen. Brown continues to work with the administration to protect the vital work being done at Wright-Patterson.

In April 2014, Sen. Brown announced approximately \$29.5 million dollars to expand a facility for the National Air and Space Intelligence Center (NASIC). The Center serves as the preeminent center for research and development on foreign air and space threats to the United States. Sen. Brown believes that NASIC's capabilities should continue to grow over time.

Advocating for the our Nation's Servicemembers

After a decade and a half of heroic efforts by American troops, Sen. Brown believes it is time to continue the removal U.S. military forces from Afghanistan and for the Afghan government to take the lead in providing its own effective security. This will allow the U.S. government to shift its focus to rebuilding our economy and creating jobs here at home, reuniting more servicemembers with their families, and supporting them as they adjust to post-deployment life.

Co-Chairing the Senate Air Force Caucus

As co-chair of the U.S. Senate Air Force Caucus, Sen. Brown has worked to support the Airmen who dedicate themselves each and every day to protect us all. Formed in the summer of 1998, the Caucus currently consists of a bipartisan group of Senators concerned with issues affecting the United States Air Force. The caucus sponsors briefings, base visits, and meetings with the

Chief of Staff of the Air Force. Sen. Brown will dedicate his time as co-chair to improving the lives of servicemembers, their families, and their communities.

Military Pay and Benefits:

Sen. Brown believes that our continued commitment to those who have served our country should not end when they hang up their uniform. We need to ensure that veterans and their families have the services and benefits that they have earned. In January and February, Sen. Brown cosponsored legislation that supports updating veterans' health benefits and repeals reductions in the cost-of-living adjustments for to the retirement pay of career servicemembers under age 62.

Addressing Sexual Assault in the Military:

Sexual assaults are an unacceptable problem in the military and in society, as a whole. Sen. Brown knows that we need to address these problems with legislation that is comprehensive, lasting, and reflective of our values as a country.

Sen Brown supports the steps taken by Congress this year to change the Uniform Code of Military Justice (UCMJ) for sexual assault victims. These steps include changes to Article 32 preliminary hearings, the military rules of evidence, and the consideration of general military character during the findings phase of courts-martial proceedings. There is also an additional review mechanism that allows the chief prosecutor of the service to request a review in any case where a convening authority decides not to refer a sex assault offense. The service secretary must review it. Hopefully, these steps will lead to additional transparency within the services for sexual assault victims.

Other measures that support the treatment and care of victims of sex assault include: an opportunity to express a preference as to whether their case is tried by the military or by the local prosecutor and a confidential review process utilizing boards for any individual who wants to challenge the characterization of their discharge.

Supporting Critical Research

Sen. Brown believes that the government should do research to find treatments and cures for specific illnesses and diseases that impact the lives of our servicemembers and their families. He supported funding through the Department of Defense to do research on transplants, vision trauma, traumatic brain injuries, autism, multiple sclerosis, and ovarian and breast cancer. Sen. Brown believes that by fully supporting servicemembers and their families we are fulfilling our promise to them.

Recognizing Aerospace Achievements

Supporting NASA Glenn's Mission

Sen. Brown congratulated NASA Glenn Research Center (GRC) on the successful Orion spacecraft test flight in December 2014. This is an exceptional step for Glenn, which played an integral role in developing key aspects of the MSC simulation software used. As NASA works toward additional missions, the testing facilities at Plum Brook in Sandusky will play a critical

role in these next steps. Sen. Brown has long supported the NASA Glenn Research Center and efforts to ensure the full utilization of Plum Brook.



Sen. Brown visited the Glenn Research Center in January 2014 with NASA Administrator Charles Bolden. During his visit there, Sen. Brown and Rep. Marcy Kaptur saw the space environmental simulation chamber and reviewed the important Solar Electric Propulsion design work done at Glenn. Solar Electric Propulsion is critical to future NASA missions to asteroids and Mars.

In October 2014, Sen. Brown sent a letter to the Aerospace States Association (ASA), urging the group to consider Ohio as host for an international event to bring more investment and jobs to the U.S. Ohio's strong aerospace and aviation legacy, and the presence of critical industry organizations, supplier companies, and research institutions, make Ohio an ideal host.

Foreign Policy & Homeland Security

Advocating for Peace

Fighting to Prevent a Nuclear Iran

In March, Sen. Brown sent a letter to President Obama stating that U.S. and international sanctions against Iran brought Iran to the negotiating table and have played an essential role in the diplomatic approach. Sen. Brown supports the Administration's efforts to ensure that Iran does not obtain a nuclear weapon.

Working for a Peaceful Middle East

Sen. Brown has long supported peace in the Middle East region. In June, he and his Senate colleagues wrote a letter to President Obama supporting the Administration's efforts to create a two-state solution to end the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. At the same time, Sen. Brown urged President Obama to push back on the Palestinian Authority – which was backed in a unity government by Hamas, a Foreign Terrorism Organization. In July, Sen. Brown cosponsored a resolution expressing the United States' support for Israel, as it defended itself against rocket attacks from Hamas. While Sen. Brown was glad that Hamas accepted the cease-fire agreement in August, he wrote to Secretary Kerry with his Senate colleagues that Hamas' delay in accepting the cease-fire caused additional suffering in Gaza and Israel. This past summer's Israel-Gaza conflict further illustrates the need to restart the peace process. Sen. Brown will continue working with his Senate colleagues and President Obama to advance the cause of a permanent peace agreement for the region.

Supporting Israel

Sen. Brown continued his strong support for Israel when he spoke with Ohio leaders from the American Israel Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC) during a March meeting in Washington, D.C. Throughout his career in public service, Sen. Brown's support for Israel has been unshakeable. Given Israel's unique position as the United States' closest ally in the region, Sen. Brown has consistently supported U.S. foreign aid to Israel, encouraged direct negotiations between Israelis and Palestinians, sought robust efforts to contain Iran and prevent it from obtaining nuclear weapons, and opposed any terrorist organization, such as Hamas, from joining the Palestinian Government. As change sweeps the Middle East, Sen. Brown knows that support for Israel is more important than ever.

Supporting Ukraine:

Following Russia's annexation of Crimea in March, Sen. Brown joined a Senate resolution condemning illegal Russian aggression against Ukraine. He has long supported the aspirations of the Ukrainian people and believes that Russian meddling needs to end. This resolution condemned Russia's escalation, called for the immediate withdrawal of Russian troops from the region, and a negotiated settlement regarding the Crimea. Additionally, Sen. Brown supported the *Ukraine Freedom Support Act of 2014*, which was signed into law by President Obama in December. This legislation will continue support for additional sanctions as well as military and non-military assistance. We need to continue our unwavering support as the Ukrainian people to live in a free and democratic nation.

Raising Awareness to Human Rights Injustices

Working to improve Congolese Adoptions

Sen. Brown believes that adoption can have an amazing impact on the lives of children and the thousands of American families who open up their arms to foreign-born children. He has been an outspoken voice for the approximately 450 Congolese children who are still awaiting the completion of their adoption process. In April and October, Sen. Brown joined bipartisan, bicameral letters to President Kabila of Congo, urging him to resolve these cases and issue the children exit permits to come to the United States. Sen. Brown cosponsored a resolution with Sen. Portman concerning the suspension of exit permits for these children that caused delays for them and the families who hoped to adopt them. In July, Sen. Brown requested that President Obama raise this important issue with President Kabila who attended the U.S.–Africa Summit in Washington, D.C. during August.

Working for the Protection of Chinese Activists

Sen. Brown, chair of the bipartisan Congressional-Executive Commission on China (CECC), wrote a letter to Ambassador Gary Locke to raise concerns regarding the treatment of Mutellip Imin, an ethnic Uyghur. Mr. Imin was detained for 79 days by Chinese authorities and prevented from continuing studies in Turkey. Sen. Brown and Rep. Chris Smith, CECC co-chair, urged the administration to look into whether Mr. Imin was mistreated during his captivity.

Hong Kong's Democratic Process

On November 11, 2014, Sen. Brown convened a meeting of the CECC to call attention to the pro-democracy protests taking place in Hong Kong. Since the middle of the summer, young Hong Kongers had been protesting against the Chinese government to increase the pool of candidates for the 2017 Hong Kong Commissioner election. Many believed Chinese officials limited changes to the election of their Chief Executive by universal suffrage, which they had promised in the past. During the protest movement, journalists were harassed and there were allegations of police brutality. Sen. Brown stands with the people of Hong Kong as they strive for free and fair elections.

Sri Lanka

Sen. Brown reaffirmed his commitment to the Sri Lankan people by cosponsoring Senate Resolution 348 in February. This resolution supports internal rebuilding, resettlement, and reconciliation within Sri Lanka, as well as establishes an independent panel to hold those convicted of war crimes accountable for their acts. These measure will help to ensure a lasting peace.

Veterans

As a senior member of the Senate Committee on Veterans' Affairs and the only Ohio senator to complete a full term on the Committee, Sen. Brown remains committed to ensuring that our nation's veterans receive the benefits they have earned.

Protecting VA Employees

Support for VA Police

In May, following a shooting at the Dayton Veterans Affairs Medical Center, Sen. Brown sent a letter to then-Secretary Shinseki highlighting the concern for the downgrading of VA police officers, along with 16 other positions in the VA, on the General Service (GS) schedule. The VA's downgrade plan would affect more than 3,300 VA police officers. More than 80 percent of police officers and more than half of all the 14,000 employees facing downgrades are veterans.

VA Whistleblower Protections

In the wake of the national wait-times scandal, Sen. Brown sent a quiet letter to the new VA Secretary Bob McDonald on September 8, 2014, regarding concerns for VA employees who were whistle blowers. The letter sought reassurances that he would ensure no retaliation would be tolerated against employees who sought to report problems within the VA.

VA Scandal and the Choice Act

Following allegations in April about wait times at the Phoenix Veterans Affairs Medical Center, the VA and the Administration launched a national investigation into VA medical facilities. This national backlash against the VA led to Under Secretary for Veterans Health Affairs, Robert Petzel's retirement on May 16 and Secretary of Veterans Affairs Eric Shinseki's resignation on May 30.

Sen. Brown supported a new piece of legislation that would increase access to care for veterans and help to alleviate many of the concerns raised by whistleblowers during the national debate over support to our veterans. As a senior member of the Senate Veterans' Committee, and the Conference Committee, Sen. Brown worked to resolve differences between the House and Senate versions of the legislations that resulted in President Obama signing the Veterans Access, *Choice and Accountability Act of 2014*, or "Choice Act," into law in August.

This instrumental piece of legislation will enable the VA to hire more doctors and nurses, provide care for veterans who live 40 miles beyond a VA medical facility, or who would have to wait more than 30 days to receive an appointment, authorizes the VA to establish 27 new VA facilities, improves medical care for victims of military sexual assault, and would require public colleges and universities to grant veterans in-state tuition. These steps will help fulfill our promise to those who have served our nation. Sen. Brown will continue to work closely with his colleagues and the Department of Veterans Affairs to ensure that the legislation is implemented the way that Congress intended.

New Secretary of Veterans Affairs



On July 23, Sen. Brown introduced Bob McDonald, President Obama's nominee to be Secretary of Veterans Affairs, during his confirmation hearing before the Senate Veterans' Affairs Committee. A native Ohioan, West Point graduate, and former Army Ranger, Mr. McDonald was also a success during his career at Procter and Gamble, eventually retiring as CEO. Prior to the hearing, Sen. Brown also met with Mr. McDonald to voice his specific concerns related to the Cincinnati VA. Mr. McDonald was

quickly reported out of committee by a vote of 14-0, and the Senate followed suit unanimously confirming him on July 29.

Ensuring Veterans Receive the Benefits They Have Earned

Working to Reduce the VA Backlog

Sen. Brown has supported addressing the backlog at the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), to make inroads into the number of claims processed by the Veterans Benefits Administration (VBA). However, the number of claims received continues to exceed the number processed. In 2014, Ohio's veterans were found to have waited 16 days longer than the 262 day national average.

Sen. Brown continues his support of two key pieces of legislation aimed at addressing the backlog. The *Claims Processing Improvement Act of 2013* would hold the VA accountable by requiring it to publically report information on both its projected monthly goals and actual production, so that Congress and the public knows if the VA is working toward eliminating its backlog. The bill would also establish a task force to hire and train claims processors and develop tactics to attack and eliminate the backlog.

Military Discharge Review:

In January, Sen. Brown cosponsored the *Restore Honor to Service Members Act*, which would have required military record correction and discharge review boards to review the discharge characterization of any former servicemembers requesting a review who were discharged because of their sexual orientation. As a strong advocate of repealing "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" Sen. Brown believes that no servicemember should have been separated from service based on sexual orientation.

Education and Employment Benefits for Veterans

Our veterans have been made a promise that if they defend our country in military service, we will provide them with the benefits they have earned. Veterans who serve their country in order to protect our freedoms deserve every opportunity to find work when they come home. They are among our most talented civilians but are too often unable to get credentialed for the training they've received.

Protecting Veterans' Cost-of-Living-Adjustment



Sen. Brown has consistently cosponsored an annual veterans' cost-of-living adjustment (COLA). These bills ensure that veterans with service-connected disabilities and their dependents receive compensation equal to the current cost-of-living adjustment for Social Security beneficiaries. It is projected that more than 4.2 million veterans and survivors will receive compensation benefits during the next fiscal year.

The *Veterans' COLA Act of 2014* gave veterans and their families an annual cost-of-living rate adjustment. Increases affected disability compensation for veterans and dependency and indemnity compensation for surviving spouses and children, and an adjustment to allow disabled veterans accepting clothing allotments to use the benefits of Veterans' COLA. Adjustments are on the Consumer Price Index -for all Urban Wage Earners (CPI-W).

Honoring Our Servicemembers

It is no surprise that Ohio is home to some of our nation's bravest servicemembers. In 2013, Sen. Brown sponsored legislation to award a Congressional Gold Medal to the World War II members of the *Doolittle Tokyo Raid* in 1942. This piece of legislation followed his successful 2013 resolution honoring the 70th anniversary of the raid and the five living WWII Raiders. After garnering substantial bipartisan support, the legislation moved quickly and was signed into law in May 2014. Sen. Brown attended the White House ceremony with Col. Dick Cole, Jimmy Doolittle's copilot who was born in Dayton, OH, in September 1915.

Sen. Brown also cosponsored bills to award Congressional Gold Medals to the *American Fighter Aces*, the *165th Infantry Regiment known as the "Borinqueneers"*, and the *WWII Civil Air Patrol*. All three were also signed into law by President Obama in 2014, as well. The Civil Air Patrol medal was awarded on December 10, 2014. In September, a resolution cosponsored by Sen. Brown, honoring African American soldiers of the Revolutionary War passed the Senate, which would authorize a location close to the National Mall to honor slaves and freed persons who fought for freedom in the American Revolution. Sen. Brown also cosponsored legislation to add Vietnam Veterans Day as a patriotic and national observance, in order to honor the service and heroic sacrifice of those Americans who served during the Vietnam War. Sen. Brown realizes the importance of honoring those who have fought and died for our country, which is why he has made these bills a priority.

Sen. Brown worked with colleagues to ensure that the *Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW)* charter was updated to reference all veterans and not just men. While the VFW has recognized all servicemembers for quite some time, this legislation formalizes a modernization of the charter. Additionally, the updated charter would recognize all surviving spouses as well, not just widow. Sen. Brown supported this revision to help sustain the VFW in future years.

Mental Health and Post-Traumatic Stress:

After corresponding and speaking with Michael Fairman, a retired career Navy Corpsman and veteran of Afghanistan, Sen. Brown introduced two pieces of legislation that would establish an online *significant event tracker* system to track, report, and summarize servicemember exposure to traumatic events. By expanding the method of documentation related to traumatic events during service, servicemembers could be eligible for additional treatment and care as they transition out of military service. The *Significant Event Tracker* was introduced in May, and a revised bipartisan, bicameral version, the *Mental-health Exposure Military Official Record of "MEMORY Act"* was introduced in July. Sen. Brown held a number of events throughout Ohio during the summer with Michael Fairman to raise awareness of the bill and garner local support, as well as endorsement by the VFW and the IAVA. Sen. Brown continues to work with the Senate Armed Service and Veterans' Affairs Committees to address this critical issue.

Gold Star Fathers:

Sen. Brown believes that supporting the families of fallen servicemember is paramount to continuing our commitment to national security. After hearing from the father of a fallen Marine, Scott Warner Canton, an Ohio native, Sen. Brown decided to take action to expand Gold Star benefits to include fathers, as well as mothers and widows. In May, Sen. Brown introduced the *Gold Star Fathers Act of 2014*, which would to provide similar federal hiring benefits to fathers of fallen servicemembers; these hiring benefits already apply to mothers and spouses of fallen servicemembers. Sen. Brown and Mr. Warner held a number of events in Ohio to showcase the need to revise the federal preferences and the legislation passed the Senate unanimously in September.

In Touch with Ohioans

Sen. Brown is working to ensure that Ohioans stay informed of important issues as well as of his work in Congress and across the state. He has travelled to all of Ohio's 88 counties and held more than 200 roundtables across our state.

His website <http://brown.senate.gov> includes interactive resources for Ohioans to directly access services, find information on issues and legislation, and learn the latest news from Sen. Brown's activities across Ohio and in Congress. He also sends e-newsletters, weekly columns, and regional updates that address issues important to Ohioans and collect their input and ideas. You can sign up for both regional and issue-specific newsletters through his website at <http://www.brown.senate.gov/newsletter>.

You can also hear directly from Sen. Brown on Twitter by following his @SenSherrodBrown account or viewing his profile at <http://twitter.com/SenSherrodBrown>. Ohioans can watch videos of Sen. Brown or listen to remarks on hot button issues on his YouTube page <http://www.youtube.com/user/SherrodBrownOhio>

If you have any questions for Sen. Brown, please do not hesitate to contact him using the form on <http://www.brown.senate.gov/contact>.

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